

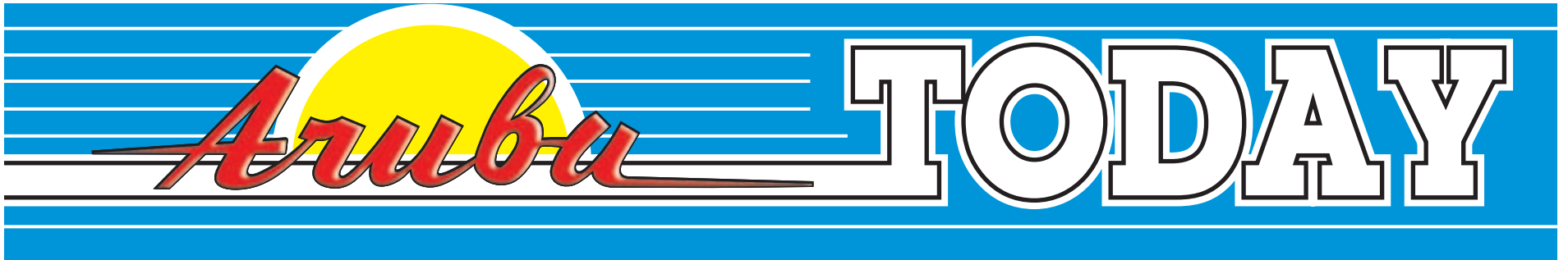
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On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Saturday, January 4, 2014

NSA TO KEEP COLLECTING PHONE DATA

**KIMBERLY DOZIER
STEPHEN BRAUN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A secretive U.S. spy court has ruled again that the National Security Agency can keep collecting every American's telephone records every day, in the midst of dueling decisions in two civilian federal courts about whether the surveillance program is constitutional.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court on Friday renewed the NSA phone collection program, said Shawn Turner, a spokesman for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Such periodic requests are somewhat formulaic but required since the program started in 2006.

The latest approval was the first since two conflicting court decisions about whether the program is lawful and since a presidential advisory panel recommended that the NSA no longer be allowed to collect and store the phone records and search them without obtaining separate court approval for each search.

In a statement, Turner said that 15 judges on the U.S. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court on 36 occasions over the past seven years have approved the NSA's collection of U.S. phone records as lawful.

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THE BIG CHILL



As Northeast Recovers From Storm, Frigid Cold Sets In

With the temperature a frightful 3 degrees Fahrenheit, Drue Ford shovels snow wearing a face mask to guard against frostbite, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014, in Brunswick, Maine.

**RODRIQUE NGOWI
MICHELLE R. SMITH**
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Homeowners and motorists dug out across the white-blanketed Northeast on Friday as extreme cold ushered in by the storm threatened fingers and toes but kept the snow powdery and mercifully easy to shovel.

At least 13 deaths were blamed on the storm as it swept across the nation's eastern half.

While the snowfall had all

but stopped by morning across the hard-hit Philadelphia-to-Boston corridor and many highways and streets were soon cleared and reopened, temperatures were in the single digits and teens, with wind chills well below zero.

"The snow is easy to move because the air was so cold when it snowed that it's sort of light and fluffy stuff — but, uh, it's cold," Avalon "Nick" Minton said as he cleared the entrance to his garage and sidewalk

in Arlington, Mass. "That's the main part. It's cold."

And officials from the upper Midwest to New England were preparing for another arctic blast over the next few days that could be even worse.

The heaviest snow fell north of Boston in Boxford, Mass., which received nearly 2 feet. Nearly 18 inches fell in Boston and in western New York near Rochester. Lakewood, N.J., got 10 inches and New York's Central Park 6.

(AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

Temperatures reached 8 below zero in Burlington, Vt. — with a wind chill of 29 below — and 2 degrees in Boston. Wind chills there and in Providence, R.I., made it feel like minus-20 Friday morning, and the forecast called for more of the same into Saturday. Emergency officials warned that anyone spending more than a few minutes outdoors in such conditions could suffer frostbite.

Continued on Page 3

Sniping shadows Kerry's pursuit of Mideast peace

DEB RIECHMANN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's closed-door diplomacy to broker peace between Israel and the Palestinians has burst into a public spat, with both sides trading blistering criticisms, Republican senators showing up in Jerusalem to argue Israel's side, and Palestinian demonstrators protesting his visit.

Kerry is on his 10th visit to the region to try to craft a peace treaty that would create a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

He met for three hours on Friday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Later in the day, Kerry traveled to Ramallah,

West Bank, to speak with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Although battered by sniping from all sides, Kerry remained upbeat — at least publicly. Asked if he was making progress, Kerry replied that progress is being made every day. Earlier, about 150 Palestinians demonstrators marched through the streets of downtown Ramallah to protest Kerry's visit. They carried Palestinian flags and signs that said: "The northern, central and southern Jordan Valley are a genuine part of Palestinian sovereignty." The West Bank's Jordan Valley is a strategic area along the border with Jordan that Israeli hardliners, including members of Ne-

tanyahu's Likud Party, say must be annexed by Israel for its own security.

So far, the two sides have engaged in about 20 rounds of negotiations, which have entered a more intense phase. Kerry is asking both leaders to start making tough, highly political decisions in hopes of narrowing differences and agree on a framework that will outline a final peace pact.

The goal is for the framework, or series of guidelines, to address all core issues, including borders between Israel and a future Palestinian state, Palestinian refugees and conflicting claims to the holy city of Jerusalem. No agreement on a framework is likely dur-

ing Kerry's visit.

Political activist Abdallah Maslamani said a proposed framework that would guide negotiations on a deal protect the security interests of "the terror state of occupation," a reference to Israel.

One night earlier, the digs were coming from the other side. Netanyahu lashed out at Abbas, accusing him of embracing terrorists "as heroes."

Netanyahu criticized Abbas' homecoming for more than two dozen Palestinians released earlier this week from Israeli jails where they had served time for deadly attacks against Israelis. The Palestinian leader never condoned their crimes, but

Netanyahu took offense.

"To glorify the murders of innocent women and men as heroes is an outrage," Netanyahu said, dampening hope that much progress would be made on the contours of an eventual peace accord during Kerry's visit. On Friday, Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, responded to Netanyahu remarks, saying that even if Abbas were Mother Teresa, the Israelis would find a way to accuse Abbas of terrorism so he wouldn't have to accept the Palestinians' demand for a state in lands Israel captured in 1967.

Even in Jerusalem, Kerry couldn't escape domestic politics interfering with international diplomacy. Three Republican senators held a news conference after meeting with the Israeli leader, reiterated his concerns, thereby emboldening Netanyahu's position right before Kerry's delicate talks with Abbas.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu has serious, serious concerns about the plan that has been presented to him — whether it be the ability of Israel to defend its borders, the viability of a Palestinian state and their intentions and their actions toward the state of Israel, and particularly on the overall security — whether it's boundaries, areas under Palestinian control," Sen. John McCain of Arizona said. McCain was in Israel with fellow Republican Sens. John Barrasso of Wyoming and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, following their visit to Afghanistan. They used their news conference to express support for a bill that would impose new sanctions on Iran if it violated a recent nuclear agreement it made with the U.S., led by Kerry, and five other world powers, an agreement Israel opposes. The United States and the other powers that are party to the agreement believe Iran's nuclear program is aimed at producing a nuclear weapon, a claim that Tehran denies, saying it is intended only for peaceful purposes. □



U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham, from left, John Barrasso and John McCain listen to a question during a press conference at the David Citadel hotel in Jerusalem, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014. Republican Sen. McCain said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has "serious, serious concerns" about parts of the proposal Secretary of State John Kerry is using to broker peace with the Palestinians.

(AP Photo/Brendan Smialowski, Pool)

1 dead as World War II bomb explodes in Germany

BERLIN (AP) — A World War II bomb or mine exploded in a western German town on Friday, killing the driver of a bulldozer and wounding 13 other people, police said.

The explosion happened in an industrial area of Euskirchen, near Bonn, at a

property used by a construction firm to sort and dispose of rubble. It wasn't immediately clear whether the explosives had long been buried in the ground or had inadvertently been brought to the site in a delivery of demolition waste. The bulldozer driver was

fatally injured after his vehicle hit the device and two people who were close by suffered serious injuries. Another 11 people who were in the area were lightly injured. Windows, roofs and doors as far as 400 meters (roughly 400 yards) away were damaged in the

blast, police said. Explosives experts were working to determine exactly what the device was.

Unexploded World War II-era bombs are still discovered frequently in Germany, though it is rare for those finds to result in death or injury. □

NSA TO KEEP COLLECTING PHONE DATA

Continued from front

Also Friday, government lawyers turned to U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to block one federal judge's decision that threatens the NSA phone records program. The opposing lawyer who spearheaded the effort that led to the ruling said he hopes to take the issue directly to the Supreme Court.

The Justice Department filed a one-page notice of appeal asking the appeals court to overturn U.S. District Judge Richard Leon's ruling last month that the program was likely unconstitutional. The government's move had been expected.

Larry Klayman, who filed the class-action suit against President Barack Obama and top administration national security officials, said he intends to petition the federal appeals court next week to send the case directly to the Supreme Court. Klayman said the move was justified because the NSA case was a matter of great public importance.

"There are exigent circumstances here," Klayman said. "We can't allow this situation to continue. The NSA's continuing to spy on everybody."

Turner said U.S. intelligence agencies would be willing to modify the phone records surveillance program to provide additional privacy and civil liberties protections as long as it was still operationally beneficial. He said the Obama administration was carefully evaluating the advisory panel's recent recommendations.

Judges sitting on the secretive spy court have repeatedly approved the program for 90-day periods. They also have repeatedly upheld the constitutionality of the program — a judicial bulwark that held strong until Leon's surprise decision last month. □

As Northeast Recovers From Storm, Frigid Cold Sets In

Continued from front

Wellington Ferreira said the cold was worse than the snow as he cleared a sidewalk in front of Johnny D's Uptown Restaurant and Music Club in Somerville,

people, and cities took special measures to look after those most vulnerable to the cold. Teams in New York City searched the streets for homeless people, while in Boston, police asked residents to

cold breaks to give mariners and others who work in or around the harbour a warm place to stay, shower and eat.

The light, powdery snow was a blessing in another respect: It did not weigh

Washington, D.C., were closed on Friday. Many government offices also shut down. Major highways in and around New York City reopened, and airports across the region struggled to resume normal operations after U.S. airlines cancelled around 2,200 flights on Friday on top of 2,300 the day before.

Jeremy Shapiro, 73, of Manhattan, became stranded at New York's Kennedy Airport on Thursday. On Friday afternoon, he was still holding out hope for a spot flying standby so he could get to Santa Barbara, Calif. He secured a cot, a pillow and a blanket after seeing about 150 passengers sleeping on cots at the terminal. "It looked like an infirmary from WWI," he said. Temperatures in the Northeast are expected to rise above freezing over the weekend before the arrival of another blast of frigid air that was already affecting the Midwest. In Wisconsin, the mercury dipped to minus 18 Friday morning in Green Bay, breaking by a single degree the record set in 1979. Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton ordered school cancelled on Monday statewide, the first such closing in 17 years, because of projected highs in the minus teens and lows as cold as 30 below. □



Men shovel snow from around parked cars on East 9th Street in the Brooklyn borough of New York, Jan. 3, 2014.

(Todd Heisler/The New York Times)

Mass.

"My ears are frozen," he said.

Warming centres opened around the region, homeless shelters received more

call 911 if they saw someone in need.

In Newport, R.I., the Seaman's Church Institute said it would stay open round-the-clock until the

down electrical lines or tree limbs, and as a result, there were only a few thousand power outages across the Northeast.

Schools as far south as

Obama administration urges court to reject nuns' lawsuit

ROBERT PEAR

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WASHINGTON - The Obama administration urged the Supreme Court on Friday to reject a lawsuit filed by the Little Sisters of the Poor, an order of Roman Catholic nuns challenging requirements for many employers to provide health insurance coverage of birth control or face penalties under the new health care law.

The Justice Department said the requirements did not impose a "substantial burden" on the nuns' right to practice their religion because they could "opt out" of the obligation by certifying that they had religious objections to such

coverage.

The Little Sisters "need only self-certify that they are nonprofit organizations that hold themselves out as religious and have religious objections to providing coverage for contraceptive services," the administration said in a brief filed with the Supreme Court by the solicitor general, Donald B. Verrilli Jr.

In addition, he said, the nuns would need to send a copy of the certification to an entity that administers their health plan, Christian Brothers Services.

On Tuesday night, just hours before the contraceptive coverage requirements were to take effect, Justice

Sonia Sotomayor of the Supreme Court temporarily blocked the Obama administration from enforcing them with respect to the nuns and certain other religious groups.

The Little Sisters of the Poor operate nursing homes for poor people in the United States and around the world.

In its filing with the court Friday, the administration said the nuns "have no legal basis to challenge the self-certification requirement or to complain that it involves them in the process of providing contraceptive coverage."

If the nuns file the certification required by federal

rules, the nuns, their self-insured health plan and the entity that administers the health plan will not be required to cover birth control, the administration said. Verrilli said the nuns were not entitled to an injunction further blocking the contraceptive coverage rules.

The nuns disagreed.

"The government demands that the Little Sisters of the Poor sign a permission slip for abortion drugs and contraceptives, or pay millions in fines," said Mark L. Rienzi, a lawyer at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, who represented the nuns in the lawsuit. "The sisters believe that doing that violates their faith." □



Despite vow, Ted Cruz still a dual US-Canadian citizen

WASHINGTON/TORONTO (AP) — U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz

vowed months ago to renounce his Canadian citizenship by the end of 2013, but the Calgary-born Republican is still a dual citizen. Cruz, 43, recently said in an interview with the Dallas Morning News that lawyers are preparing the paperwork to renounce citizenship, just as he said in August.

Richard Kurland, a Vancouver-based immigration attorney, wonders what's taking so long. Kurland said Friday that unless there's a security or mental health issue that hasn't been disclosed, renouncing citizenship is a simple, quick process.

The thorny issue of the tea party darling's birthplace has been a headache for the senator, since some in the neo-conservative movement had accused President Barack Obama of being born in Kenya and thus not eligible to be U.S. president. Obama's father was Kenyan, his mother American.

Cruz, the junior senator

from Texas, is eyeing a run for president in 2016.

"If he's attempting to bring our system into disrepute by suggesting it's lengthy and complex, it's just not true. Revocation is one of the fastest processes in our system," said Kurland.

Stephen Green, an immigration lawyer in Toronto, was equally perplexed.

"It's not complicated at all," said Green, whose firm, Green and Spiegel, reached out to offer help to Cruz at one point but never received a reply from the senator's office.

"They make sure you understand what you're doing, that you're not going to become a stateless person, and then you're rock 'n' roll, and good to

go. I would assume that if he's retained counsel, this could have been done by now."

Canada's best-known citi-

zenship renouncer, media magnate Conrad Black, said in an email Friday that it "doesn't take long" for the revocation process to

work.

He added Cruz may come to regret the move.

"He's making a mistake; he'll never go higher in the U.S. electoral system than he is now, and Canada's a better governed country than the U.S.," said Black, who gave up his Canadian citizenship in 2001 in order to accept a peerage in the British House of Lords. Cruz's office didn't immediately respond for a request for comment.

Cruz was born in Calgary, Alberta, when his parents were working in the Canadian oil business. His mother, Eleanor, is a native-born American, while his father, Rafael, is a Cuban who didn't become a U.S. citizen until 2005. □



Senator Ted Cruz speaks to members of the media about how he thinks the country needs to move forward economically after his meeting with the Odessa Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013 at the chamber offices in Odessa, Texas.

(AP Photo/Ryan Evon)

Florida soon to pass New York state in population

MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Sometime this year, Florida will surpass New York in population, becoming the third-most populous state in the U.S. behind California and Texas.

The milestone is validation of the sometimes messy but increasing influence of the Sunshine State as it approaches being home to 20 million residents.

"Florida is kind of an icon of the 21st century in terms of the shifting population

and the growing role Latin America is playing in transforming the country," said James Johnson, a business professor at the University of North Carolina. Florida encompasses many trends in America: an aging population, a service-oriented economy with many low-wage jobs and an ethnic diversity propelled by Hispanic growth. Like the United States, Florida is a haven for migrants and people making fresh starts. The state's 29 electoral votes are the nation's most coveted in presidential elections, since Florida is the largest state that doesn't reliably vote for one party or another.

New Floridians, such as 47-year-old Michael Richards, list reasons for moving here: the weather, no state income tax, the availability of low-skill jobs and proximity to Latin America and Europe. "You put up with three months of hell (in the

summer) for nine months of great weather," said Richards. Although Florida has the nation's largest share of residents over age 65, seniors account for less than 10 percent of new residents in the last several years. Instead, more than half of the new arrivals are between 25 and 64, according to an AP analysis of data from the U.S. Census' American Community Survey. Almost two-fifths of them were under age 25.

New York isn't shrinking in population. Florida's growth is outpacing it by a 3-to-1 ratio. More than 537,000 residents moved to Florida last year, and around a tenth of them came from New York State. As of last July, the two states were separated by about 98,000 people: New York had 19.6 million residents and Florida had 19.5 million residents, according to Census figures released earlier this week. □



Gloomy Americans foresee a downhill slide to 2050



Kelly Miller, 22, a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota, poses in Minneapolis, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014. Miller looks forward to some great things in the future, but also worries that people will become overly reliant on technology. Ask people to imagine American life in 2050, and you'll get some dreary visions. Whether they foresee runaway technology or runaway government, rampant poverty or vanishing morality, a majority of Americans predict a future worse than today. (AP Photo/Ann Heisenfelt)

CONNIE CASS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ask Americans to imagine life in 2050, and you'll get some dreary visions. Whether they foresee runaway technology or runaway government, rampant poverty or vanishing morality, a majority of Americans predict a future worse than today. Whites are particularly gloomy: Only 1 in 6 expects better times over the next four decades. Also notably pessimistic are middle-age and older people, those who earn mid-level incomes and Protestants, a new national poll finds. "I really worry about my grandchildren, I do," says 74-year-old Penny Trusty of Rockville, Maryland, a retired software designer and grandmother of five. "I worry about the lowering of morals and the corruption and the confusion that's just raining down on them." Even groups with comparatively sunny outlooks — racial and ethnic minorities, the young and the nonreligious — are much more likely to say things will be the same or get worse than to predict a brighter

future. "Changes will come, and some of them are scary," says Kelly Miller, 22, a freshly minted University of Minnesota sports management grad. She looks forward to some wonderful things, like 3D printers creating organs for transplant patients. But Miller envisions Americans in 2050 blindly relying on robots and technology for everything from cooking dinner to managing their money. "It's taking away our free choice and human thought," she says. "And there's potential for government to control and regulate what this artificial intelligence thinks." Overall, 54 percent of those surveyed expect American life to go downhill, while 23 percent think it will improve, according to a December survey from the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Only 21 percent predict life will stay about the same. That minority may be onto something, however. While no one can say what catastrophes or human triumphs are to come, contentment at a personal level has proven remarkably

stable over the past four decades. Interviews by the federally funded General Social Survey, one of the nation's



Political science student La'Shon Callaway, 19, of Egg Harbor Township, N.J., poses for a photograph as he stands on the campus of The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, in Galloway, N.J., Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2013. Callaway is optimistic that racial discrimination will continue to decline over his lifetime. "People are getting tired of it, and fed up," said Callaway. "They're realizing even if you're not the same color as me, you're still a person and I'm still a person." (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

longest-running surveys of social trends, show Americans' overall happiness as well as satisfaction with their jobs and marriages barely fluctuating since 1972. Those decades spanned the sexual revolution and the women's rights movement, race riots and civil rights advances, wars from Vietnam through Afghanistan, the birth of

the home computer and the smartphone, boom times and hard times. Despite the recent shift toward negativity, the portion of U.S. residents rating themselves very or pretty happy stayed around 9 out of 10. "Most people evaluate their lives very stably from year to year," said Tom W. Smith, the director since 1980 of the GSS, conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. The GSS, conducted once every two years, will send interviewers back into the field in 2014. The AP-NORC Center survey asked people to rate the change in American life during the period tracked by the GSS, from 1972 to 2012. A majority — 54 percent — say life in America is worse today than four decades ago. Those old enough to remember the early '70s are especially nostalgic. Those who say U.S. life has declined are more apt to name politics, the economy, moral values or changes in families as the biggest

are rarely uttered today. Back then, nearly 4 in 10 nonblacks agreed with the idea that whites had the right to keep blacks "out of their neighborhoods." A quarter of nonblacks said they wouldn't vote for a black man for president, and 26 percent of all adults wouldn't back a well-qualified woman. Now the president of the United States is black and a woman is the most-discussed presidential prospect for 2016. The GSS dropped those three questions in the 1990s.

LOVE AND FAMILY

In 1972, the sexual revolution was ablaze. That year the Supreme Court ruled that unmarried couples had a right to birth control. Still, a third of Americans back then disapproved of a woman working if she had a husband to support her. The GSS no longer bothers asking that one. Americans today are more worried about divorce and the increasing number of never-married moms. Nearly 4 out of 10 women who gave birth in 2011 were unmarried, according to the census. Despite the social turmoil, 98 percent of married people today say their union is happy, including two-thirds who are "very happy." And marital fidelity remains an ideal endorsed by nearly all Americans. The political debate over abortion shows no signs of being resolved, more than 40 years after Roe vs. Wade. Young people today are somewhat more conservative on the issue than middle-aged Americans. Gay marriage, on the other hand, appears headed toward future acceptance. Young people are solidly in favor, while opposition is strongest among the oldest Americans.

MONEY

Recession, a stock market crash, runaway inflation and an oil crisis marred the U.S. economy in the early 1970s. Forty years later, those look like the good times to many. □

EQUALITY

Some of the opinions voiced in the 1972 survey

Bernanke:

2014 could be better year for US economy

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said Friday that factors which have kept the economy from accelerating appear to be abating, and he predicted stronger growth in 2014. Americans' finances have improved and the outlook for home sales is brighter, Bernanke said. He also expects less drag from federal spending cuts and tax increases. The combination "bodes well for U.S. economic growth in coming quarters," Bernanke said during

a speech to the annual meeting of the American Economic Association in Philadelphia. Bernanke made a similar assessment of the economy at a Dec. 18 news conference after the Fed's last meeting. At the meeting, the Fed announced it would begin in January to reduce its monthly bond purchases from \$85 billion to \$75 billion, noting signs of an improving economy. The bond purchases are intended to keep long-term interest rates low and encourage more borrowing and spending. Friday's appearance was

expected to be one of Bernanke's final speeches as Fed chairman. He is stepping down at the end of this month after eight years leading the central bank. The Senate is expected to confirm Janet Yellen Monday to be the next Fed chairman. She would take over on Feb. 1. In his speech, Bernanke said that he tried to make the Fed more transparent and accountable while at the same time combating a deep recession and severe financial crisis. Making the Fed more transparent was an important goal for him when he took

over in 2006. He cited his participation in more television interviews, his efforts to hold more town hall meetings and his visits to universities. Bernanke also added a quarterly news conference after four of the Fed's eight policy meetings. "We took extraordinary measures to meet extraordinary economic challenges and we had to explain those measures to earn the public's support and confidence," Bernanke said. Bernanke said while the financial crisis has passed "the Fed's need to educate and explain will only grow." □

US says might deregulate corn, soybean seeds

M.L. JOHNSON
Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — The U.S. government on Friday proposed eliminating restrictions on corn and soybean seeds that are genetically engineered to resist a common weed killer, a move welcomed by many farmers but worrisome to scientists and environmentalists who fear it could invite growers to use more chemicals on crops. The herbicide known as 2,4-D has had limited use in corn and soybean farming because it becomes toxic to the plants early in their growth. The new seeds would allow farmers to use the weed killer throughout the plants' lives. Farmers have been eager for a new generation of herbicide-resistant seeds because of the prevalence of weeds that have become immune to Monsanto's Roundup. But skeptics are concerned use of the new seeds and 2,4-D will only lead to similar problems with weeds resistant to that chemical. Scientists and environmentalists also say 2,4-D can easily drift beyond the area where it is sprayed, threatening neighboring crops and wild plants. Most corn and soybeans grown in the U.S. are already genetically engineered, usually with a Roundup-resistant trait. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's plant-inspection agency concluded that the greatest risk from the new seeds developed by Dow AgroSciences was increased use of 2,4-D, which could hasten the evolution of weeds resistant to it. But, the agency said, resistance could develop anyway because 2,4-D is the third most-used weed killer in the nation. For now, the seeds can only be used in tightly controlled trials. But the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service published a draft environmental-impact statement Friday as part of the process for potential deregulation of the seeds. □

Martha Stewart Living, Macy's settle contract dispute

ELIZABETH A. HARRIS
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Macy's and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia have ended their legal battle over whether J.C. Penney had the right to sell certain Martha Stewart branded housewares. On Thursday, Macy's and Martha Stewart announced that they had settled the breach-of-contract case, saying the details were confidential and not material to either company. They said their partnership would continue, but declined to comment further. Macy's larger suit against J.C. Penney remains. Macy's said the settlement with Martha Stewart Living would not affect that case. Macy's and Martha Stewart Living joined forces in 2006 with an agreement to sell "Martha Stewart" branded products in Macy's stores, including exclusive items like kitchenware and bedding. The partnership has done well over the years, accounting for \$250 million in sales in 2012. But Martha Stewart Living and J.C. Penney announced a deal in 2011 to sell home décor products out of Martha Stewart store-within-a-store locations at Penney's stores. The move was part of a broader turnaround effort by J.C. Penney's previous chief executive, Ron Johnson, who

was fired last year as losses mounted at the retailer. After the deal was announced, Macy's sued them both, saying it violated the terms of its origi-

Days before a judge was expected to rule on the Penney case, Penney and Martha Stewart Living backed down, revising their agreement to exclude

the case, said at the time that the new agreement "was a complete surrender." With the settlement, Martha Stewart Living puts to rest



A Martha Stewart kitchen and home collection display at a Macy's store in Bronxville, N.Y. Macy's and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia will keep their partnership, announcing this week that they ended their legal battle over whether J.C. Penney had the right to sell certain Martha Stewart branded housewares.

(Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times)

nal contract with Martha Stewart Living. The retailer called for pulling certain items off Penney's shelves and demanded compensation for loss of profits. Penney and Martha Stewart Living countered that their agreement fell into an exception carved out in the Macy's contract.

kitchen, bed and bath products, items that the Macy's suit said were exclusive. In effect, J.C. Penney gave up many core home décor products and was left with items like rugs and window treatments. Theodore M. Grossman of the Jones Day law firm, the lead counsel for Macy's in

a costly and contentious case. In October, Martha Stewart Living reported a disappointing third quarter, partly because the diminished relationship with J.C. Penney had cut into revenue. J.C. Penney has shown some signs of improvement in recent months, although it continues to post losses. □

US Financial Front:

American auto sales best in 6 years as demand ebbs

DEE-ANN
TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writers

DURBIN

DETROIT (AP) — Automakers are going to have to work a little harder for your business in 2014.

After four years of strong sales increases — and few discounts — as the economy improved, U.S. demand for new cars and trucks is expected to slow this year. That could mean better deals for buyers as car companies fight to increase their share of the market.

The industry got a taste of what's to come in December, when General Motors, Toyota and Volkswagen all saw their sales fall from a year ago. One reason: Competitors like Ford and Honda increased their incentive spending on hot sellers like pickup trucks and midsize cars, according to TrueCar.com, which tracks car prices. Cold weather and strong sales over Black Friday in late November also pinched December sales, automakers said.

This year's slowdown is inevitable, analysts say. Many people who held on to their cars through the recession have now bought new ones. Those who haven't may not be in any rush, because cars are lasting longer than ever before. And unless there's a strong uptick in the economy, families aren't likely to buy a third car.

Alec Gutierrez, senior analyst for Kelley Blue Book, expects U.S. sales to increase by around 700,000 to 16.3 million in 2014. That compares to increases of more than 1 million each year since 2009, when U.S. sales bottomed out at 10.4 million.

"Sales are approaching

an equilibrium level of demand based on the needs of population and the number of licensed drivers in the country," he said.

struggled, with sales falling 7 percent as its vehicles aged compared with rivals.

Gutierrez said Honda of-

more per vehicle on incentives in December, likely taking aim at GM's new pickup trucks. Those are the kinds of tricks buyers

Automotive Lease Guide, a company that tracks lease costs and car prices. On a conference call to discuss December results, General Motors executives made several references to competitors raising discounts to boost sales, especially on full-size pickup trucks. While they pledged to stick to their strategy of selling on value rather than price, U.S. sales chief Kurt McNeil said GM also has to respond to the market.

Industrywide inventory is rising, and that could also increase discounts because carmakers will have to sell off excess vehicles. But McNeil said prices likely won't come down too much because the underlying economy is strong. Also, carmakers closed plants and got leaner during the recession, so the country is no longer seeing the kind of overproduction it saw a decade ago.

The average price of a new vehicle in December was \$32,890, which was about the same as a year ago, according to Kelley Blue Book. □



A covered vehicle sits in part of the new paint shop at Chrysler's Sterling Heights Assembly Plant in Sterling Heights, Mich. Chrysler finished 2013 with a 9 percent sales increase. The company said Friday, Jan. 3, 2014, that it sold just over 1.8 million cars and trucks last year, up from 1.65 million a year earlier.

(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

So 2013 could be remembered as the last of the boom years. As automakers reported full year sales Friday, analysts were expecting an increase of more than 1.2 million — or 8 percent — to around 15.6 million. It would be the best performance since 2007, when 16.1 million new cars and trucks were sold.

Ford led all major automakers in 2013 with an 11 percent gain to almost 2.5 million vehicles. Chrysler and Nissan posted 9 percent gains. GM, Toyota and Honda each posted 7 percent gains. GM sold 2.8 million cars and trucks in the U.S., compared to just over 2.2 million for Toyota. Hyundai's sales rose 2.5 percent.

Among major automakers, only Volkswagen

fered \$3,000 in bonus cash to dealers in December for every vehicle they sold beyond their 2012 numbers. And Ford said it spent \$600

can expect to see more of this year. "We think there's going to definitely be more competition," said Larry Dominique, president of

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United States orders evacuation from embassy in South Sudan

ALAN COWELL

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The United States on Friday ordered a further reduction of U.S. Embassy staff in

strife-torn South Sudan and said it would cease to provide consular services for its citizens as of Saturday, apparently reflecting a

somber assessment of the country's prospects even as the country's warring factions were reported to have opened preliminary

indirect talks in neighboring Ethiopia.

A travel advisory on the website of the State Department said Washington "ordered a further draw-down of U.S. Embassy personnel because of the deteriorating security situation" in South Sudan, which has been seized with conflict between its main political factions since December.

"We continue to urge U.S. citizens in South Sudan to depart the country," the message said, offering an evacuation flight Friday "to the nearest safe haven country" on a "first-come, first-served basis."

"The U.S. Embassy will no longer be able to provide any consular services to U.S. citizens in the Republic of South Sudan as of January 4, 2014," the message said.

The United States began evacuating U.S. citizens from its embassy in Juba,

the capital, and from other parts of the country as the fighting spread in December. Washington sent 45 U.S. soldiers to protect the embassy, and evacuation flights ferried hundreds of embassy personnel, other Americans and some citizens of other countries out of South Sudan.

The travel advisory on Friday did not go into detail about the number of U.S. Embassy personnel to be withdrawn from Juba. But the U.S. ambassador, Susan D. Page, said in a message on Twitter: "We are not suspending our operations, we are just minimizing our presence."

After three weeks of fighting between forces loyal to the government of President Salva Kiir and rebels aligned with the former vice president, Riek Machar, efforts have been underway for days to convene peace talks in Ethiopia. □



American citizens board a Marine Corps plane during a partial evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Juba, South Sudan, Jan. 3, 2013. The State Department has strengthened calls for Americans to leave the increasingly strife-torn country and will suspend consular services as of Saturday, reflecting a somber assessment of peace talks set to begin in neighboring Ethiopia.

(Staff Sgt. Robert L. Fisher III/ US Marines via The New York Times)

5 Doctors Without Borders staffers seized in Syria

BASSEM MROUE

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Five staffers of the international aid organization Doctors Without Borders have been taken in for questioning in northern Syria, the group said Friday.

The five staffers were taken "allegedly for questioning" from a Doctors Without Borders house in northern Syria, and have been out of contact since Thursday evening, said Michael Goldfarb, a spokesman for the aid group. He did not say whether the missing staffers had been taken by government forces or rebels fighting to overthrow President Bashar Assad, and refused to give further details out of concern for the missing workers' safety. Rami Abdurrahman, the head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said that members of the al-Qaida-linked Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant had stormed a hospital in the northwestern province of Latakia and taken all of its doctors to an unknown location.

Others were taken from their homes by ISIL members, he added.

Abdurrahman said it was not clear whether the Doctors Without Borders members were among those taken in Latakia.

Opposition-held areas of northern and eastern Syria have seen a wave of kidnappings over the past six months that has targeted journalists, aid workers and activists. Al-Qaida-linked rebel factions are suspected of being behind many of the abductions.

In October, several members of the International Committee of the Red Cross were briefly abducted in northwestern Syria. Many Syrian activists have fled the country after threats by ISIL and the killing of a number of citizen journalists.

Also Friday, activists reported heavy clashes between Syrian opposition fighters and ISIL members in the northern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib.

More than 130,000 people have been killed so far in the war, now in its third

year, according to the Observatory. The group closely monitors the violence in Syria through a network of activists across the country. The U.N. said in July that

ment but later turned into a civil war. Over the past years, clashes between rival opposition groups became common in rebel-held areas.



This image shows Syrians inspecting a burnt bus after a missile fired by Syrian government aircraft hit the vehicle in the rebel-held neighborhood of al-Bab in Aleppo, Syria. Five staffers of the international aid organization Doctors Without Borders have been taken in for questioning in northern Syria, the group said Friday.

(AP Photo/Aleppo Media Center AMC)

100,000 Syrians have been killed, and has not updated that figure since.

Millions of Syrians have been uprooted from their homes because of the fighting.

The crisis began as an uprising against President Bashar Assad's govern-

The Observatory said Friday's fighting was concentrated in the city of Aleppo and the nearby town of Atareb. Fighting between rebel factions and ISIL, which has many foreign fighters in its ranks, has been common in areas under opposition control.

The Aleppo Media Center reported clashes between the ISIL and the Mujahdeen Army in rebel-held western parts of Aleppo.

Tension has been rising between rebel groups and ISIL of late, especially after Tuesday's killing of a senior rebel by the al-Qaida-linked group. The Observatory said the slain rebel, doctor Hussein Suleiman, was found dead after being shot several times and his ear was cut "with a sharp object."

The newly created Islamic Front, an umbrella group of powerful, mostly ultra-conservative Islamic fighters, issued a statement ordering ISIL to hand over Suleiman's killers so they can stand trial. Clashes later erupted between the groups.

A video released by activists showed dozens of people marching in Aleppo and chanting "Free Syrian Army forever, against ISIL and Assad."

The video appeared genuine and corresponded to other AP reporting of the events depicted. □

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A respite, then mayhem:

al-Qaida-aligned militants fighting for key Iraqi cities

YASIR GHAZI

TIM ARANGO

© 2014 New York Times

BAGHDAD - Days of fighting between black-clad al-Qaida militants and Iraq's security forces took a short-lived respite Friday as a veneer of calm returned to Fallujah, where traffic police and street cleaners resumed work and mosque loudspeakers exhorted stores to reopen so hungry residents could buy food. But just as quickly, the calm evaporated when the militants appeared at the close of Friday Prayer - which had been moved by local imams to a public park, away from the combat zones - and seized the stage, waving the al-Qaida flag and daring the Iraqi authorities to evict them. "We declare Fallujah as an Islamic state, and we call on you to be on our side!" one fighter shouted to the

crowd, according to witness accounts.

Referring to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Shiite-dominated government and its Shiite ally, Iran, the fighter shouted,

"We are here to defend you from the army of Maliki and the Iranian Safavids," a reference to the Persian Empire that ruled present-day Iran and Iraq hundreds of years ago.

"We welcome the return of all workers, even the local police, but they have to be under our state and our rule," he shouted.

From that moment, mayhem resumed in Fallujah and other areas of Sunni-dominated Anbar province, including in its largest city, Ramadi, in an escalating fight. It has pitted al-Qaida-affiliated Sunni extremists, who now control large amounts of territory in the desert province, against



Civilians inspect the aftermath of a massive bomb attack in Balad Ruz, 45 miles (70 kilometers) northeast of Baghdad, Iraq, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014. Officials in Iraq say scores have been killed in a pickup truck laden with explosives blew up on a busy commercial street Thursday evening in the city of Balad Ruz.

(AP Photo)

the security forces of the Shiite-dominated central government, backed by local tribesmen who are not strong supporters of

the government but, in this struggle, have decided to side with the army and police against al-Qaida.

The fight has become a se-

vere test of al-Maliki's ability to keep the country together and prevent a full-scale eruption of civil war.

□

Despite protests, Thailand says February vote will go ahead

THOMAS FULLER

© 2014 New York Times

BANGKOK - Thailand's election commission ignored the demands of anti-government demonstrators Friday and said elections scheduled for next month would go ahead despite continuing efforts to sabotage them.

The announcement appeared to be a significant victory for the departing government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, which has vast support in northern provinces and is seemingly certain to win the elections.

Protesters, who say they are fighting to eradicate corruption and banish Yingluck and her clan from the country, have blocked candidate registration sites over the past week and clashed violently with police, leaving two people dead. The protesters, who on some days have numbered more than 100,000 people, also say they are planning to "shut down" Bangkok this month by cutting power to government buildings and blocking major intersections.

Before Friday's announcement, at least one member

of the election commission seemed sympathetic to the protesters' demands and was urging a delay in the election. But the commission's secretary-general, Phuchong Nutawong, was unequivocal Friday in saying that the election would take place as scheduled Feb. 2 because "it is the law."

"We will hold elections," he said. "We can confirm this to you."

It was not immediately clear what prompted the change in tone from the commission.

The protesters, who began

their demonstrations two months ago, have been assisted by members of the Democrat Party, the country's oldest political party, which announced last month that it would boycott the elections.

The protesters' rationale for blocking the elections is that the family of Yingluck has done so much damage to the country that her party's re-election would be "a return to the same corruption," in the words of the protest leader, Suthep Thaugsuban.

Suthep on Thursday sought to refine his vision of the

"people's council" that he hopes would replace Parliament. The council would comprise representatives of various professions as well as members appointed by senior civil servants, he said. The main focus of the protesters' ire is Yingluck's brother, Thaksin Shinawatra, the billionaire tycoon and former prime minister ousted in a 2006 coup. Protesters say the dominance of the Shinawatra family is subverting Thai democracy. The second candidate on the party's electoral list is Somchai Wongsawat, Thaksin's brother-in-law. □

Pope warns of fallout from poorly trained priests

NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis has warned that priests can become “little monsters” if they aren’t trained properly as seminarians, saying their time studying must be used to mold their hearts as well as their minds.

Francis also warned against accepting men for the priesthood who may have been implicated in sexual abuse or other problems, saying the protection of the Catholic faithful is most important.

The pontiff made the comments Nov. 29 during a closed-door meeting of 120 superiors of religious orders who gathered at the Vatican for their regular assembly. On Friday, the Jesuit journal *La Civiltà Cattolica* provided a report of the three-hour, informal question and answer session. The Vatican never provided a transcript of the meeting.

The magazine, which interviewed Francis last year, quoted the first Jesuit pope as telling the superiors he wants them to “wake up the world” with their work, particularly with the poor. “Truly to understand reality we need to move away from the central position of calmness and peacefulness and direct ourselves to the peripheral areas,” he said.

Francis, who headed the Jesuits’ novice training program in his native Argentina

in the 1970s, also warned the superiors of some of the failings of seminary training, or “formation,” such as when would-be priests merely “grit their teeth, try

quently criticized. The training of priests, he said, must be a “work of art, not a police action.”

“We must form their hearts. Otherwise we are creat-

only 36 when he was made superior of the Jesuits in Argentina in 1973, during a particularly turbulent time for the order in general and Argentina in particular.



In this photo provided by the Vatican paper *L'Osservatore Romano*, Pope Francis listens as Jesuit leader Rev. Adolfo Nicolas, second from right, delivers his message during a mass he celebrated with the Jesuits on the occasion of the order’s titular feast, in Rome’s Jesus’ Church, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014.

(AP Photo/Osservatore Romano, ho)

not to make mistakes, follow the rules smiling a lot, just waiting for the day when they are told ‘Good, you have finished formation.’”

“This is hypocrisy that is the result of clericalism, which is one of the worst evils,” Francis was quoted as saying, returning to the issue of clericalism — or a certain cronyism and careerism among the men of the cloth — that he has fre-

ing little monsters. And then these little monsters mold the people of God. This really gives me goose bumps,” he was quoted as saying.

Francis has spoken on several occasions about life in religious orders — the good and the bad — and hasn’t shied from offering his own personal experiences when speaking with groups of nuns and priests. The former Jorge Mario Bergoglio was

In his remarks to the superiors, Francis flagged as a risk the “huge problem” of accepting into the seminary someone who has already been asked to leave another religious institute, and cited Pope Benedict XVI’s tough line on priests who commit sexual abuse.

“I am not speaking about people who recognize that they are sinners: we are all sinners, but we are all not corrupt,” Francis said. □

After Antarctic drama, Chinese rescue ship is hindered by ice

EDWARD WONG
ALAN COWELL

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BEIJING - One day after a Chinese icebreaker played a central role in the rescue of 52 passengers from an icebound research vessel in Antarctica, crew members on the Chinese ship said it might itself become trapped by ice, according to Australian officials Friday.

A helicopter from the Chinese vessel, the *Snow Dragon*, was part of a dramatic operation Thursday that displayed unusual international harmony in one of the world’s most remote and inhospitable places, plucking the passengers from a makeshift landing zone on the ice near the Russian research ship that had been lodged in ice for more than a week.

Images of the passengers being rescued from the *Akademik Shokalskiy* showed them smiling as they walked single file to a landing area on the ice that had been cleared by passengers and crew members.

Other images on the Internet showed crew members hauling sleds laden with luggage. □

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France mulls ban on comic, his double-edged salute

ELAINE GANLEY

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — It's caught on like a dance move — one hand pointing downward, the other touching the shoulder with an arm across the chest. But for many, the gesture popularized by a French comic is hateful and anti-Semitic.

Now, France's top security official wants to ban him from the stage.

Dieudonne M'Bala M'Bala has a small but faithful following of fans from disparate walks of life. Some are marginalized immigrants from France's housing projects. Some are Muslims. Some are even adherents of the far-right.

But Dieudonne's profile has soared since the gesture, dubbed the "quenelle," went viral in recent months. To Interior Minister Manuel Valls, it is an "inverted Nazi salute." He is exploring ways to ban gatherings he says threaten public order as a means of keeping the comic from performing.

But Dieudonne, who goes only by his first name, is adamant the quenelle — named for a fish dumpling eaten in some parts of the country — is an anti-establishment sign meaning

"shove it."

Valls' critics caution that going after the comic has the whiff of a witch-hunt and fear it may endanger a fundamental right to freedom of speech.

The 47-year-old Dieudonne (pronounced DYEU-dun-ay) has been convicted more than a half-dozen times for inciting racial hatred or anti-Semitism over the years.

He was most recently convicted last fall for using the word "Shoananas," a mash-up of the Hebrew word for Holocaust and the French word for pineapple, seen as making light of the Holocaust.

An investigation also opened this week after Dieudonne allegedly made an anti-Semitic slur toward a Jewish journalist on France-Inter radio. "When I hear him (the journalist) talk, you see ... I say to myself gas chambers ... A pity," Dieudonne said during a performance last month, parts of which were shown on French TV.

"I think 2014 will be the year of the quenelle," Dieudonne said in a video posted this week on YouTube. In that video, Dieudonne also denied he is anti-Semitic:

"There's a misunderstanding. I don't say I won't be one day. I leave that possibility open."

Soccer star Nicolas Anelka used the quenelle recently to celebrate a goal, and

But a photo posted on French news sites shows a man doing the quenelle in front of the Jewish school in Toulouse where an Islamic extremist gunned down three children and a rabbi

rior minister surrounded by youth doing the quenelle at a September inauguration, clearly without his knowledge.

Sociologist Michel Wieviorka wrote a commentary



West Bromwich Albion's Nicolas Anelka, right, gestures to celebrates his goal against West Ham United during their English Premier League soccer match at Upton Park, London, on December 28, 2013. It's caught on like a dance move one hand pointing downward, the other touching the shoulder with arm across the chest. But for many, the gesture is a hateful, anti-Semitic code. France's top security official wants the entertainer who popularized it banned from the stage.

(AP Photo/Sang Tan)

basketball star Tony Parker did it years ago. Both said they did not understand it was an anti-Semitic gesture. Parker said in a mea culpa released by the San Antonio Spurs that he "thought it was part of a comedy act."

in March 2012. Another showed two soldiers saluting in front of a Paris synagogue.

One photo shows the inte-

in Thursday's Le Monde arguing that Dieudonne's mixed-bag audience has a common denominator — anti-Semitism. □

Thatcher considered using military during 1984 miners' strike

ALAN COWELL

© 2014 New York Times

LONDON - As striking miners challenged her grip on power in 1984, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher secretly considered calling out the British military to transport vital supplies of food and coal around the country and declaring a state of emergency to bolster the government in one of the defining confrontations of her tumultuous years in office, according to previously classified documents released Friday.

The government papers, released by the National Archives, cast new light on an era that shaped Britain for decades, crushing the power of labor unions and establishing an ideologi-

cal reverence for market forces that has endured through successive Labour and Conservative governments.

In 1984, by contrast, Thatcher, who died in April at age 87, faced a militant union movement that threatened to bring the country to a halt as dock workers seemed poised to support striking coal miners who clashed frequently with the police along the picket lines.

"The Left's aim is to pave the way for the ultimate defeat of the government by destroying its policies and its credibility," John Redwood, a policy adviser to Thatcher who has survived as an emblem of the Conservative right, said in

one of the documents released Friday.

On July 16, 1984, the papers showed, Thatcher met her most senior Cabinet ministers to debate the possibility of declaring a state of emergency and using the military to transport coal and food.

Moreover, Britain's leaders displayed a degree of edginess about taking such dramatic measures, fearful that such action could deepen the crisis.

"It was not clear how far a declaration of a state of emergency would be interpreted as a sign of weakness, nor to what extent it would increase dock support for the miners' strike," the record of the meeting said. □



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European lending lags, sign recovery may remain weak

DAVID McHUGH
AP Business Writer
FRANKFURT, Germany

(AP) — New figures show that European banks are lending less to companies — another sign the continent's economic upswing remains less than robust. The European Central Bank reported Friday that loans to companies slipped by 3.1 percent in November from a year earlier. The drop was sharper than the previous month's 3.0 percent.

Analysts say banks can be reluctant to lend given uncertain growth prospects that mean increased risk they won't be repaid. Some companies, meanwhile, may not want to risk borrowing. Others don't need credit because they are sitting on adequate cash reserves — but don't yet see a reason to invest that cash in new production.

The economy of the euro currency union — a bloc that grew from 17 to 18 members in the new year with Latvia's accession — expanded by only 0.1 percent in the third quarter last year, with unemployment at 12.1 percent. Governments' efforts to reduce debt by cutting spending and raising taxes have weighed on growth.

Analyst Howard Archer at IHS Global Insight said the weak figures increased pressure on the ECB to add stimulus to the economy in the coming months. He said the ECB could offer cheap, long-term loans to banks on the condition the money is used for lending. Archer expects the ECB to keep its benchmark lending rate at the current record low of 0.25 percent "through to 2015, although it is not inconceivable that it could trim it to 0.1 percent or even 0.0 percent." Lower interest rates can stimulate growth. But the problem is the ECB's already-low benchmark rates are not being passed along by banks. So the ECB is looking at other measures, such as the targeted loans. □

Fiat's challenge: Improve performance in Italy, Asia

DAVID JOLLY

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PARIS — The Fiat boss, Sergio Marchionne, has finally won complete ownership of Chrysler and can begin trying to realize his dream of building a world-class carmaker to compete with industry leaders Toyota, General Motors and Volkswagen. At the top of the to-do list: Stanch the deterioration in Fiat's home market and fix a glaring hole in its Asia business.

Marchionne, chief executive of Chrysler and Fiat, rescued the Detroit automaker from bankruptcy in a 2009 deal with the Obama administration that gave Fiat 58.5 percent of Chrysler and the potential to raise that stake. In an agreement announced Wednesday, the companies said Fiat would buy the remaining 41.5 percent from a United Automobile Workers health care trust for \$4.35 billion. The deal creates a company that last year had \$114 billion in sales, making it the world's seventh-largest automaker. Marchionne has long held that to be competitive and profitable in the global auto market, a carmaker needs to sell at least 6 million vehicles annually. The Chrysler-Fiat alliance, which sold about 4.5 million vehicles last year, remains short of that target. The agreement capped months of thorny negotiations and opens the way to a possible New York listing of Fiat-Chrysler shares. It also smooths the way for a relaunch of the Alfa Romeo brand in the United States.

"It's a deal that Fiat had to get done," Harald Hendrikse, an analyst at Nomura in London, said. "As usual, Mr. Marchionne's pulled a rabbit out of the hat."

Investors welcomed the news. Fiat's shares soared 16 percent Thursday on the Milan bourse.

To lift sales, Marchionne must look to emerging markets, analysts said.

Fiat has a good presence in Brazil, enjoying a healthy 23 percent of the market, though that share is under threat from aggressive

the lost ground." He suggested the Japanese automakers Mazda and Suzuki as possible partners.

While Chrysler is doing well in the United States, with sales rising 9.3 percent last year, Fiat is faltering in Europe. Its European sales — which include its own brand, as well as Lancia, Chrysler, Alfa Romeo and

about 2 percent.

"The Fiat brand at this stage is no longer a relevant competitor in the European space," Hendrikse said. The company, he added, is "horrendously undercapitalized and badly positioned. I don't see how Chrysler is going to help them much in Europe."



A hostess sits in a Fiat 500 during the first press day of the 65th Frankfurt Auto Show in Frankfurt, Germany in September, 2013. Fiat boss Sergio Marchionne has finally won complete ownership of Chrysler and can begin trying to realize his dream of building a world-class carmaker to compete with industry leaders Toyota, General Motors and Volkswagen.

(AP Photo/Michael Probst)

entrants like Toyota and Hyundai.

But it has only a minimal presence in China, the world's biggest car market. Massimo Vecchio, an analyst at Mediobanca in Milan, said the only hope of reaching Marchionne's goal of 6 million vehicles was through a partnership with an Asian automaker that would allow it to gain access to the Chinese car market, the world's biggest. "Fiat is late to the game in Asia," Vecchio said. "That's the only way they'll be able to recover

Jeep vehicles — fell 7.8 percent in the 11 months through November from the same period in 2012. That's far worse than the 2.7 percent decline in the overall European market. In that time, the company's market share slipped to 5.8 percent from 6.2 percent. But the picture is even worse than it first appears, Hendrikse said. The company is overly reliant on Italy, which accounts for about a third of Fiat's sales. Excluding the Italian market, he said, Fiat's European market share is only

When the deal was first struck in 2009, Fiat played the white knight to Chrysler, providing the American company with leadership and technology at a moment of crisis. Chrysler's Dodge Dart, for example, is built on a modified Alfa Romeo platform.

But now the roles are reversed. Chrysler has been providing virtually all of Fiat's profit for the last three quarters, and with Europe's car market expected to grow only about 3 percent this year, that is unlikely to change soon. □

Spain Dec jobless dip best on record for the month

MADRID (AP) — The number of people registered as unemployed in Spain fell by 107,570 in December, the best drop on record for the month and welcome news for an economy struggling to recover after

a two-year recession. The Labor Ministry said Friday the decrease left the total number of unemployed at about 4.7 million. It said the unemployment figure dipped by 147,385 for the whole of 2013.

Quarterly unemployment surveys — seen as more accurate by economists — show that Spain's unemployment rate was 26 percent in the third quarter, with 6 million people jobless. The rate is the sec-

ond highest in the 28-country European Union after Greece.

The Spanish government insists the economy is on the mend and will create jobs in 2014. □



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But getting some warmth and friendly professional staff at a place which offers nice Caribbean décor and superb food quality at very reasonable prices - there are not many places around that offer all this under one roof.

We know only one place on Aruba that offers all this and much more: The Blue Lobster Restaurant, which offers over 25 lobster dishes on the same menu, and a great variety of seafood dishes which makes of The Blue Lobster Restaurant the lobster mecca in Aruba.

Thousands of tourists and locals have visited this great restaurant in the merely 2 years that it has been in operation, and it is time for you to join the long list of repeat visitors, which have visited over 3 times before returning home from their vacations!

Or perhaps be in the list of those who arrive in Aruba and go to eat there even before checking in at their hotel. Or it is possible to have heard about this great restaurant "The Blue Lobster" even before arriving on this beautiful island: do not be surprised! TripAdvisor has already granted a Certificate Of Excellence for 2012, and 2013 consec-

utively, and locally the restaurant has been named "The Best Lobster House On Aruba."

But it is not just because of the excellent food quality being served there. The friendly and attentive staff and the Caribbean décor, enhanced by the historical old-fashioned pictures of Aruba adorning the walls of this cozy and romantic little place give the best ambience for dining. Guests enjoy great piano music by

patrons have enjoyed at this wonderful restaurant in Palm Beach.

There are some other real reasons for its growing popularity, and for steadily increasing its list of repeat



Richard Clayderman which brings out the best memories of your life while sipping a glass of your preferred wine.

All of this is what international organizations like TripAdvisor and The 10Best, as well as of thousands of

visitors. The Blue Lobster's management never forgets that great cuisine does not necessarily have to be expensive. Just ask around and confirm that a real 3 course dinner, including lobster and wine, will cost at least sixty dollars per person at most restaurants on Aruba: but not at The Blue Lobster! It does not even get to Forty bucks, so to top up this story there you can get the cake and eat it too. Lobster tails, garlic Shrimps,

Lobster chimichurri, Lobster linguini, are only some of the wonderful dishes you can get included in this special. Of course if you prefer go for meat. You can have a nice center cut filet mignon instead.

So it is nice, it is friendly, it is relaxing, serves great food and it is affordable.

That is what patrons are saying about The Blue Lobster Restaurant, the newest and greatest Lobster house of Aruba.

Here's what one of our recent guests submitted to TripAdvisor!

"Great Little Place!"

5 Of 5 Stars.

Reviewed October 28, 2013.

"My husband and I visited The Blue Lobster during our honeymoon in Aruba the week of 10/13-10/18. We really enjoyed our evening! We had reservations but did not know how long it would take to get there from our hotel (we were at the Radisson). We ended up taking a cab, although we could have walked. We were about 15 minutes early and our table was not ready so we just sat at another table outside on the porch while we waited. We were OK with this, however the manager was so nice, he kept coming over and updating us on when our table would be ready. Once our table was ready we were happy to see that it was inside, my husband was very warm!"

"The inside of the restaurant is air conditioned but was not freezing cold like some places. It is very small, with only about 6 or 7 tables and a small bar, but very cozy and decorated with photographs of the island. It was adorable, we really loved the atmosphere. There were no loud people, everyone seemed to just be enjoying a nice quiet meal which is exactly what we were looking to do that evening. Our waiter was very attentive and knowledgeable about the menu. We ordered the Shrimp cocktail to share as an appetizer, it was kind of small, but it tasted very good and we did not want to fill up before our dinner so it was perfect for us. We each ordered the 8oz. Lobster Tails which came with potatoes and veggies. It was delicious and the perfect size. We were pretty full, but we had to try the apple beignets! They were served warm with ice cream, so good!! We each had two drinks. Our bill was less than \$140 before tip. We are from the Northeast and are used to going out to higher priced restaurants so we were pleasantly surprised with the affordability of such a wonderful meal. We are very excited to return to Blue Lobster next year when we go back to Aruba!" Come and see for yourself what everyone is talking about: Make your reservations for The Blue Lobster Restaurant, and come enjoy a little slice of heaven on Aruba! □

There's nothing like the Excelsior Casino Poker room at Holiday Inn!

PALM BEACH - Whenever you sit down to play a poker cash game, you are sitting down to play this game in its purest form. Long before the huge tournaments that are so popular today, poker was played for money wherever men gathered, is a man game that many ladies has mastered.

Excelsior Casino poker room's has been making Aruba history since 1987 when gamblers, from

around the world meet at the tables.

Previous and current owners were always passionate about giving players excitement, good odds and friendly service, as the old saying - Good Times and Good Gamble.

Excelsior was recognized as the place to go for high roller action and generous to all players. The first World Poker Tournament from UB (Ultimate

Bet) was held at Excelsior Casino and gamblers like; Phil Helmut, Chris Money-maker, Devilfish and countless others, actors like Lou Diamond Phillips and Ben Affleck has seat at the tables at the poker room of Excelsior Casino.

As a legacy Excelsior casino is continuing to making things great for any poker gambler..This Poker Room is the ultimate test of any playing skills! □



Greg Asadoorian performing at The Sopranos Piano Bar Aruba



ed, adults-only late night show.

Greg has enjoyed playing all over his native New England and was ranked among the highest rated piano bar entertainers during a five-year stint with Carnival Cruise Lines.

He performs Sunday through Friday from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. □



PALM BEACH - Piano bar entertainer Greg Asadoorian is performing in Aruba through February 28 at The Sopranos Piano Bar at Arawak Gardens, J.E. Irausquin 368.

A professional piano bar entertainer for 10 years, Greg Asadoorian delivers

an energetic rock 'n' roll show that gets the audience into the act. With accents of harmonica and percussion to his dexterous piano playing and versatile vocals, Greg is a true one-man band. In addition to a repertoire of crowd favorites, he also offers an R-rated,

The Year 2014 had begun and we had simple fun

By Roland W. Peterson.

Never before in history was it ever seen
That is the year 2014
The streets filled with smoke
And believe me this was no joke

You could hardly see your neighbor,
Jokingly everyone wished the other a Happy New Year
Even if you could not see, but only hear
That was all you could hear

There was Johnny Chan
Who ignited the "pagarra"
There was no other who can
Then came Rudy with his clan
We all told jokes and had some fun

The pop of the champagne bottle was not even heard,
as we sipped the champagne the cold breeze settled in
It started to drizzle then
the neighbors went home

The year 2014 had begun
And we had simple fun.

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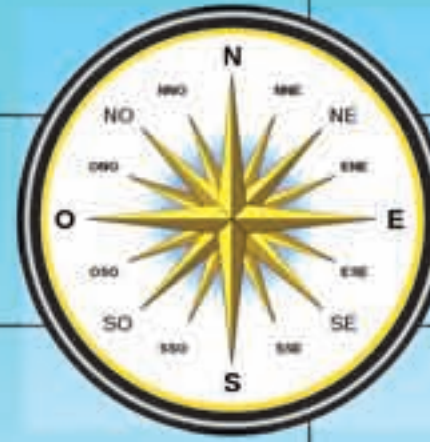
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-  Right of way at intersection
-  Oncoming traffic has right of way
-  Stop. Right of way ahead
-  Do not pass
-  No Left turn
-  No Right turn





NFL Preview

Getting key players back a must for NFL playoffs

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

Sometimes it's not who's hot but who's healthy that matters in the NFL playoffs. The fact that teams playing in the wild-card round this weekend must win an extra game to get to the Super Bowl makes it even more difficult to avoid injuries. Yet those teams have been successful: In seven of the last eight seasons, a Super Bowl qualifier played in the wild-card round. Only 2009 was the exception.

Six times in that span, the eventual champion also came through the wild-card weekend.

On Saturday, it's Indianapolis vs. Kansas City, then Philadelphia vs. New Orleans. On Sunday, Cincinnati welcomes San Diego, then Green Bay hosts San Francisco.



Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers (12) celebrates with wide receiver Randall Cobb (18) after an NFL football game against the Chicago Bears, Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in Chicago. Cobb made the game-winning touchdown reception in the Packers' 33-28 win to capture the NFC North title.

Associated Press

Players returning from injury will be huge in Green Bay and Kansas City.

For the Packers, the defense has been a sieve and is missing its top player, linebacker Clay Matthews, but the comebacks of passer Aaron Rodgers and receiver Randall Cobb for the regular-season finale not only provided a boost to the offense but lifted Green Bay into the post-season. Rodgers, back from a broken left collarbone, and Cobb, who was out with a knee injury, combined on a fourth-down, 48-yard touchdown pass in the final moments at Chicago.

That touchdown gave the Packers the division title.

Their reward: Last season's NFC champions, the 49ers, going to Lambeau Field.

Continued on page 20



A man looks at cars parked for the technical verifications of the Dakar Rally 2014 in Rosario, Argentina, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014. The race sets off on Jan. 5, from Rosario, Argentina and finishes in Valparaiso, Chile on Jan. 18.

Associated Press

VICENTE L. PANETTA

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Aymara Indians are vowing to block Dakar Rally competitors from Bolivia's high-altitude salt flats, where President Evo Mo-

rales is hoping the world's hardest rally will boost tourism.

Organizers of the race, which starts in Rosario on Sunday, are permitting only motorbikes and quad bikes near Salar de Uyuni, the

Bolivians vow to block Dakar Rally on salt flats

largest salt flats in the world. Cars and trucks will take a more direct route from Argentina into Chile on Jan. 12 and 13. While some Aymara back the race, others fear crowds will leave rubbish and the racers will carve deep marks into the shiny white surface.

The Salar de Uyuni is 11,800 feet (3,600 meters) above sea level and stretches over more than 4,000 square miles (11,000 square kilometers). It's a breeding ground every November for South American flamingos, and the briny water under the lake's hard surface has high concentrations of lithium, which is

mined for batteries.

Rain is expected during the Bolivia leg, which could leave a sheen of water over the crusty surface and create what seems like an endless mirror. But that liquid also could moisten the salt, raising chances that heavy equipment will break through hard layers that have built up over thousands of years.

Cars commonly cross the salt flats, with SUVs carrying tourists and pickups supplying salt harvesters and lithium operations. But they generally avoid the lake when it's covered with water, which is why racing cars and trucks will detour.

"It's a precipitous route, there could be water on the surface of the salar, and there's only one lane for all the vehicles, which doesn't allow for cars and trucks," Dakar Rally chief Etienne Lavigne said on the race website. The organizers did not respond to requests for comment on Thursday on the environmental issues. Bolivia's environment and water minister, Jose Zamora, said his agency was preparing an environmental permit and will protect the area's natural beauty. Meanwhile, the government also was sending troops to keep close watch over the race. □

Ex-Vikings punter: Coach made anti-gay remarks

JON KRAWCZYNSKI

AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Former Minnesota punter Chris Kluwe says his special teams coordinator made anti-gay comments while Kluwe was with the Vikings, an allegation the coach "vehemently denies."

In an article posted Thursday on the website Deadspin, Kluwe wrote that coach Mike Priefer made several anti-gay comments in objection to Kluwe's outspoken opposition of an anti-gay marriage amendment in Minnesota.

Kluwe also says former Vikings coach Leslie Frazier and current general manager Rick Spielman encouraged him to tone down his rhetoric in an effort to reduce distractions to the team. At the same time, Kluwe said, Vikings owner Zygi Wilf expressed support for his championing of gay rights.

Hours later, Priefer issued

a statement disputing Kluwe's portrayal of the events.

"I want to be clear that I do not tolerate discrimination of any type and am respectful of all individuals," Priefer said. "I personally have gay family members who I love and support just as I do any family member."

The Vikings said in a statement that they take the allegations "very seriously and will thoroughly review this matter."

The statement said the team has always respected its players' individual rights and promoted tolerance.

"Because he was identified with the Vikings, Chris was asked to be respectful while expressing his opinions," the statement said. "Team ownership and management also repeatedly emphasized to Chris that the Vikings would not impinge on his right to ex-

press his views."

Kluwe called Priefer "a bigot" and Spielman and Frazier "two cowards" for releasing him in May after eight seasons with the Vikings.

He was due to make \$1.45 million, which was more than the financially strapped Vikings wanted to spend on a punter. So they drafted Jeff Locke and parted ways with Kluwe, bringing to an end his colorful and outspoken stay in Minnesota.

"Any notion that Chris was released from our football team due to his stance on marriage equality is entirely inaccurate and inconsistent with team policy," the Vikings said Thursday. "Chris was released strictly based on his football performance."

In his article, Kluwe alleged that Priefer grew more and more impatient with the various causes Kluwe supported and several times



This is a July 28, 2012 file photo showing Minnesota Vikings punter Chris Kluwe at NFL football training camp in Mankato, Minn.

Associated Press

made anti-gay remarks during team meetings.

Kluwe said wanted to post his article now in hopes of discouraging the Vikings, or any other team, from employing Priefer, who is

widely respected at Vikings headquarters and is viewed by some as a potential head coach one day.

Priefer was hired by the Vikings in 2011 after previously serving as the special teams coach in Denver and Kansas City.

"The primary reason I entered coaching was to affect people in a positive way," Priefer said. "As a coach, I have always created an accepting environment for my players, including Chris, and have looked to support them both on and off the field."

"The comments today have not only attacked my character and insulted my professionalism, but they have also impacted my family."

Kluwe said he wanted to wait to air his grievances until after the NFL regular season so as not to provide a distraction to his friends on the team. □

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Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "from the pier to your plate!"



ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fisherman of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad. Driftwood owner Herby

Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing.

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Driftwood Restaurant. This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their

extended menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 4-course menu for just \$25.95 **Charter deep sea fishing rates:** \$400 - 1/2 day • \$760 - full day. Rates per boat Max. 6 people. **Driftwood Restaurant** Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant; Klipstraat #12, Downtown Oranjestad. Tel: (297) 583 2515 www.driftwoodaruba.com Open hours: every day, from 5pm till 10:30pm. Sunday Closed.



Oklahoma beats Alabama 45-31 in Sugar Bowl

BRETT MARTEL

AP Sports Writer

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — First-year quarterback Trevor Knight threw for 348 yards and four touchdowns in a breakout performance to lead the University of Oklahoma past the University of Alabama 45-31 in college football's Sugar Bowl on Thursday.

Knight had only completed 47 passes all season but connected on a Sugar Bowl-record 32 for the Sooners.

"It's huge for our program, to get a win like this after no one gave us a chance all year," Knight said. "We've got to ride this into next year."

AJ McCarron passed for 387 yards and two touchdowns for the Crimson Tide, which had been ranked No. 1 for much of the past three seasons and won the previous two national titles. McCarron also had two interceptions that set up Oklahoma TDs, and his fumble, returned for a score in



Oklahoma head coach Bob Stoops holds the Sugar Bowl trophy with his team after defeating Alabama 45-31 in the NCAA college football matchup in New Orleans, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014.

Associated Press

the final minute, sealed Alabama's first two-game losing streak since its Sugar Bowl loss to Utah in January 2009.

"Put it all on me. I had two turnovers, (Oklahoma) ended up scoring 14 points, and we lost by 14," said

McCarron, who won 36 of his first 38 games before losing his last two.

It was the first Sugar Bowl in which quarterbacks for both teams threw for more than 300 yards.

"I actually thought that the players responded in

practice pretty well for this game," Alabama coach Nick Saban said. "We put over 500 yards of offense up. Somebody had to do something right. I don't think that we played as well on defense as we're capable of or should have."

Derrick Henry's 43-yard run in the third quarter pulled Alabama to 31-24, and the Crimson Tide defense forced four punts while giving up only one first down in the third quarter. But Alabama was unable to add another score before the Sooners starting moving the ball again in the final quarter.

Knight lofted a perfect pass to Lacoltan Bester for a 34-yard gain to the Alabama 9. Shortly after, Knight rolled left all the way to the sideline before rifling a touchdown strike to Sterling Shepard, making it a two-touchdown game again with 10:44 left.

Henry pulled Alabama back with in a score once more when he turned his first career completion into a 61-yard TD with 6:22 still to go.

But Oklahoma then registered its seventh sack when Eric Striker stripped McCarron, and Geneo Grissom returned it 8 yards for a score. □

NFLPRE

Continued on page 18

The Packers can't count on the Lambeau mystique - they lost half their home games this season, and to the best teams they faced there, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

The 49ers are one of the strongest wild-card teams in recent NFL history. They have no fear of going on the road, where they were 6-2. They beat Green Bay at Candlestick Park to start the season, and are on a six-game winning streak.

Kansas City, runner-up to Denver in the AFC West, got off to a 9-0 start, but then started getting hurt. Top linebackers Justin Houston and Tamba Hali, tackles Branden Albert and Eric Fisher — the top overall draft choice last year — and receiver Dwayne Bowe were sidelined or hobbled at various times, and the Chiefs lost five of their last seven



Kansas City Chiefs running back Knile Davis, center, jumps in the end zone as he scores a touchdown against the San Diego Chargers during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in San Diego.

Associated Press

games.

"Big-time players want to make big-time plays in big-time games," Bowe said. "These are the games you have to show up."

Houston missed the final five games with a dislocated right elbow and will wear a brace against Indianapolis.

Indianapolis is relatively healthy. The Colts won their last three games by a combined 78-20 and committed the fewest turnovers (14) and fewest penalties (66) in the NFL.

These teams met in Arrowhead Stadium just two weeks ago and the Colts dominated after a slow

start, winning 23-7. The key for the unpredictable Colts is protecting quarterback Andrew Luck.

The one wild-card game where injuries are relatively a nonfactor is Philadelphia-New Orleans. Unless you count the Saints' damaged pride about their inability to win on the road.

They went 8-0 at home but have been mediocre away from the Superdome, dropping their last three. They have never won a road playoff game.

Still, they feel their experience in the postseason — many of the current Saints won the 2009 championship — will provide an edge. "We have been through a lot together," quarterback Drew Brees said. "We know the expectation level. We know the preparation. I think there is a level of pride that comes along with that — and accountability."

Philly is fully invested in first-year coach Chip Kelly's up-tempo offense, and an improving defense. After losing 10 in a row at home

dating to last season, the Eagles won their last four, never allowing more than 21 points. Holding New Orleans to so few points would be a good idea. The Eagles can't wait to try.

"The great thing about where we are right now is if you win, you get to play again," Kelly said.

The Chargers haven't lost since Cincinnati beat them in San Diego on Dec. 1. They won their final four games to sneak into the final AFC wild card. They have concerns about 1,000-yard rusher Ryan Mathews' ankle and receiver-punt returner Eddie Royal's toe. They haven't been in the playoffs since 2009 and have only six remaining players from that team.

Cincinnati, in the playoffs for a franchise-best third straight year, lost its top defensive player, tackle Geno Atkins, in midseason. Current injury worries include most of the offensive line and tight end Tyler Eifert (neck). □

Curry's 36 leads Warriors past Heat, 123-114

The Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Stephen Curry scored 36 points and handed out 12 assists and David Lee scored 32 points as the Golden State Warriors beat the Miami Heat 123-114 Thursday night and extended the NBA's longest current winning streak to seven games.

Curry was 13 for 22 from the field and 8 for 15 from beyond the arc for Golden State. Lee added 14 rebounds, Klay Thompson scored 16 points and Harrison Barnes had 15 for the Warriors.

LeBron James scored 26 points and Dwyane Wade added 22 for the Heat, which had all five starters in double figures. Chris Bosh scored 19, Mario Chalmers had 17 and Shane Battier 11 for Miami.

But the Heat allowed Golden State to shoot 56 percent, make 15 of 29 tries from 3-point range, and finish with a 40-31 rebounding edge.

KNICKS 105, SPURS 101

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Iman Shumpert scored a career-high 27 points, including the tiebreaking tip-in with 23.4 seconds left, and Carmelo Anthony had 27 points and 12 rebounds in his return from injury as New York surprised San Antonio. Amare Stoudemire added 11 points and Beno Udrih and Andrea Bargnani had 10 each for the Knicks, who ended a three-game losing streak.

Marco Belinelli had a career-high 32 points, but missed a pair of 3-pointers in the final minute for San Antonio.

The Spurs dropped to 12-5 at home this season. They had won three in a row overall.

The Knicks' skid coincided with Anthony sitting out with a sprained left ankle, but the All-Star forward looked refreshed in revitalizing the team's struggling offense.

NETS 95, THUNDER 93

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Joe Johnson hit a high-arching jumper as time expired to give Brooklyn a comeback victory over

Oklahoma City.

Johnson's game-winning shot capped an improbable rally from a 16-point second-half deficit for the Nets, led by a season-high 29 points from Deron Williams.

Brooklyn trailed 77-61 late in the third quarter, but Williams scored 18 in the second half and helped set the stage for Johnson's last-second shot. Paul Pierce added 18 points for the Nets.

Kevin Durant led the Thunder with 24 points. Oklahoma City was playing its fourth straight game without injured All-Star Russell Westbrook.

The loss was the second straight for the Thunder, only the second time they've lost two in a row this season.

TRAIL BLAZERS 134, BOBCATS 104

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP) — Wesley Matthews had 25 points, including five of Portland's 21 3-pointers, as the Trail Blazers routed Charlotte.

The Blazers hit their first seven 3-pointers and finished by making 63.6 percent of their 33 attempts. Damian Lillard finished with 24 points, including all six of his 3-point tries. The 21 3-pointers matches a franchise high, set in a 139-105 victory at the Philadelphia 76ers on Dec. 14.

With the win, Portland upped its record to 26-7 and moved back into the top spot in the Western Conference.

It was the season-high fifth-straight loss for the Bobcats, who were coming off a 112-85 loss to the Clippers the night before. Charlotte has lost six straight in Portland.

Chris Douglas-Roberts came off the bench to lead the Bobcats with 20 points. Al Jefferson added 19.

CAVALIERS 87, MAGIC 85, OT

CLEVELAND (AP) — Anderson Varejao hit two crucial jumpers in overtime and tied a franchise record with a career-high 25 rebounds as Cleveland beat Orlando to end a season-high six-



Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) shoots a 3-point basket as Miami Heat's Norris Cole, right, defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014, in Miami.

Associated Press

game losing streak.

The Cavaliers were playing without All-Star point guard Kyrie Irving, who missed his first game this season because of a bruised left knee. Irving averages a team-high 22.2 points.

Orlando couldn't hold a 10-point lead in the fourth quarter and Cleveland tied the game on Dion Waiters' layup with .06 seconds remaining.

Varejao's basket with 2:07 remaining in OT put Cleveland ahead 83-81. He added another basket with 1:34 left and hit two free throws with 23.9 seconds remaining to finish with 18 points. Glen Davis scored 16 points for the Magic, who scored only two points in the extra session.

BULLS 94, CELTICS 82

CHICAGO (AP) — Joakim Noah had 17 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists to help Chicago defeat Boston.

Carlos Boozer added 16 points, Luol Deng 14, Taj Gibson 12 and Mike Dunleavy 11 for the Bulls.

Noah had nine assists early in the fourth quarter, but couldn't get another and fell just short of a triple-double. Butler missed a jumper with 8 seconds left, Noah's last chance at reaching 10 assists.

Jordan Crawford led the Celtics, who have lost two straight, with 22 points.

GRIZZLIES 99, SUNS 91

PHOENIX (AP) — Jerryd Bayless scored 13 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter,

coming off the bench to help Memphis overcome Goran Dragic's career-high 33 points in a win over Phoenix.

Bayless helped the Grizzlies recover from the Suns' 18-0 third-quarter run, giving Memphis a 94-84 lead on a 3-pointer with 4:30 to play. Zach Randolph had 20 points and 15 rebounds in leading the Grizzlies past the Suns for the second time this season. Ed Davis added 16 points and 11 rebounds.

76ERS 113, KINGS 104

SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — Thaddeus Young had 28 points and Evan Turner had 24 as Philadelphia won its third straight game.

Reserve guard Tony Wroten had 21 points for Philadelphia, which ends a six-game road trip Saturday in Portland. Young had a career-high six steals, including five in the first half. DeMarcus Cousins scored 22 of his 33 points in the opening half for the Kings, who committed 23 turnovers and lost their sixth home game in a row to the 76ers.

JAZZ 96, BUCKS 87

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Gordon Hayward scored 22 points and Derrick Favors had 21 points and 11 rebounds to help Utah hold off Milwaukee.

Hayward, Utah's leading scorer, had failed to reach double digits in the previous two games but was efficient from the start against the Bucks with 18 points in the first half.

The Jazz made all 17 free throw attempts and out-rebounded the Bucks 43-34 in a matchup of teams with the worst records in each conference.

In other NBA games it was Cleveland 87, Orlando 81, OT; Golden State 123, Miami 114;

Chicago 94, Boston 82; Brooklyn 95, Oklahoma City 93; New York 105, San Antonio 101; Memphis 99, Phoenix 91; Utah 96, Milwaukee 87; Portland 134, Charlotte 104; and Philadelphia 113, Sacramento 104. □

S. Williams beats Sharapova in Brisbane semifinals

JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) —

Serena Williams extended her winning streak against Maria Sharapova to 14 matches with a 6-2, 7-6 (7) semifinal victory Friday to earn a shot at back-to-back Brisbane International titles.

The defending champion will play second-seeded Victoria Azarenka in Saturday's final, and will be favored to retain the title that kicked off her stunning 2013 season that included 78 wins from 82 matches and 11 titles.

After blowing two match points in the tiebreaker, Williams sealed the win with her seventh ace against the third-seeded Sharapova. In their first meeting since the French Open final, the uneasy rivals barely exchanged glances before the match and only briefly shook hands after.

Both players were returning aggressively — leading to 15 double-faults between them and six breaks of serve in the second set — and hitting their grounds strokes hard and deep. Williams hit consecutive double-faults to give Sharapova a mini-break at 5-4 in the tiebreaker, something she said she couldn't remember ever doing before on tour. Sharapova responded with a double-fault to make it 5-5, and said she'd missed her opportunities.

"I had a few missed chances ... but overall I'm happy I can compete at this level in my third match back," Sharapova said. "It's a good sign for me."

Any friendship that existed between the pair soured when they traded personal barbs relating to their romantic relationships ahead of last year's Wimbledon, where Sharapova made an early exit.

Sharapova only played one match after that in 2013 as she recovered from a right shoulder problem.

Williams said she'd need to vastly improve her first-



Serena Williams of the U.S. slips and falls in her semifinal match against Maria Sharapova of Russia during the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014.

Associated Press

serve percentage — which sunk to 40 in the semifinals — to beat Australian Open champion Azarenka, who overcame a shaky serve and another case of the nerves to beat former No. 1-ranked Jelena Jankovic 1-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Facing two of her biggest rivals back-to-back in her first tournament of the year, and less than two weeks before the Australian Open, is a big step up in preparations for Williams. "Yeah, I feel like I'm being pushed into the deep end straightaway," she said. "I also think it's a good thing." Azarenka had her problems on serve, too. She

dropped her first three service games and was facing three break points in the opening game of the second set when she shifted the momentum with a winner she picked up on a half-volley when Jankovic was in control of the point. After needing 10 match points to beat Stefanie Voegele in the quarterfinals the previous night, Azarenka missed one chance to serve it out at 5-2 in the deciding set, conceding a break with a double-fault. She then missed a match point at 5-4 but held her nerve and finally finished it off on her second match point. □



Spain's Rafael Nadal serves to Germany Peter Gojowczyk in their semifinal match the Qatar Open tennis tournament at the Khalifa Tennis Complex in Doha, Qatar, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014.

Associated Press



Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland plays a shot against Benjamin Becker of Germany during the second round of the ATP Chennai Open 2014 in Chennai, India, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014. Wawrinka won the match.

Associated Press

Wawrinka earns 300th win to reach Chennai semis

CHENNAI, India (AP) — Stanislas Wawrinka earned his 300th win on the ATP tour on Friday as he breezed past Slovenian Aljaz Bedene 6-2, 6-1 to reach the semifinals of the Chennai Open. Wawrinka became only the fourth Swiss player to reach the milestone after Roger Federer (923), Marc Rosset (433) and Jakob Hlasek (432).

"I didn't know about it before coming here," Wawrinka said. "It's been a long time on the tour and it's amazing. For sure it's special. But I was focused on the match and knew that even if I did not get here I had a chance next week." The top-seeded Wawrinka needed little more than an hour to beat Bedene, who had ousted the Swiss player in the quarterfinals here last year in their only previous meeting on the tour. Wawrinka started with a break and ran up a quick 5-0 lead in the first set. The 95th-ranked Bedene did manage a break in the sixth game but couldn't put up much of a fight the rest of the way.

"I'm very happy with the start this year, I feel very good," Wawrinka said. "Usually, I need a few tournaments but this time I feel good already."

Wawrinka will next play fifth-seeded Vasek Pospisil of Canada, who beat local favorite Yuki Bhambhani 6-3, 6-3. In the other quarterfinals, seventh-seeded Frenchman Edouard Roger-Vasselin saved eight break points to beat Dudi Sela of Israel 7-5, 6-7 (6), 6-0, while sixth-seeded Marcel Granollers of Spain ousted No. 4 Benoit Paire of France 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (5). □

Nadal beats Gojowczyk to reach Qatar Open final

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Rafael Nadal reached the final of the Qatar Open on Friday by coming from behind to beat German qualifier Peter Gojowczyk 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. Nadal is looking for his first title in Doha and will face Gael Monfils of France, who only needed 55 minutes to dispatch Florian Mayer of Germany 6-3, 6-2 in the other semifinal.

"I'm in the final," Nadal said. "That (will) probably give me a little bit more

confidence, a little bit more rhythm." Nadal lost the first three games against the 162nd-ranked Gojowczyk but came back to level the first set before losing serve again in the 10th game.

The top-ranked Spaniard then raced to a 4-1 lead in the second and broke Gojowczyk's in the third game of the decider after two forehand errors by the German.

"We'll see if I am able to make (changes) tomorrow

to play a little bit better," Nadal said.

The 31st-ranked Monfils hasn't dropped a set all week but has only won twice against Nadal in 10 previous meetings. However, both those victories came here in Doha — in the 2009 quarterfinals and the 2012 semifinals.

This will be Monfils' third appearance in the Doha final — he lost to Roger Federer in 2006 and to Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in 2012. □

U.S. library offers glimpse of bookless future



Caroline Ramirez, left, and Sam Martinez, use computers at BiblioTech, a first of its kind digital public library, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2013, in San Antonio.

Associated Press

PAUL J. WEBER
Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The future of the public library looks a lot like an Apple Store. Rows of glossy iMacs and iPads beckon. Hundreds of other tablets stand ready for checkout to anyone with a borrowing card. This \$2.3 million library in Texas has no actual books. That makes BiblioTech the nation's only bookless public library, a distinction that has attracted people from as far away as Hong Kong who want to learn about the idea and possibly take it home.

All-digital libraries have been on college campuses for years. But Bexar County,

which runs no other libraries, made history when it decided to open BiblioTech. It is the first bookless public library system in the country, according to information gathered by the American Library Association.

San Antonio is the nation's seventh-largest city but ranks 60th in literacy, according to census figures. In the early 2000s, community leaders in BiblioTech's neighborhood of low-income apartments and thrift stores complained about not even having a nearby bookstore, said Laura Cole, BiblioTech's project coordinator. A decade later, Cole said, most

families in the area still don't have wi-fi.

"How do you advance literacy with so few resources available?" she said.

Residents are taking advantage now. The library is on pace to surpass 100,000 visitors in its first year. Finding an open iMac among the four dozen at BiblioTech is often difficult after school lets out, and about half of the facility's e-readers are checked out at any given time, each loaded with up to five books.

Head librarian Ashley Elkholf came from a traditional library and recalled the troubles of her old job: misshelved items hopelessly lost in the stacks, pages

thoughtlessly ripped out of books and items that went unreturned by patrons who were not intimidated by measly fines and lax enforcement.

But in the nearly four months since BiblioTech opened, Elkholf has yet to lend out one of her pricey tablets and never see it again. The space is also more economical than traditional libraries despite the technology: BiblioTech purchases its 10,000-title digital collection for the same price as physical copies, but the county saved millions on architecture because the building's design didn't need to accommodate printed books.

"If you have bookshelves, you have to structure the building so it can hold all of that weight," Elkholf said.

Up the road in Austin, for example, the city is building a downtown library to open in 2016 at a cost of \$120 million. Even a smaller traditional public library that recently opened in nearby Kyle cost that city about \$1 million more than BiblioTech. On her first visit, 19-year-old Abigail Reyes got a quick tutorial from a librarian on how to search for digital books and check out tablets. "I kind of miss the books," Reyes said. "I don't like being on the tablets and stuff like that. It hurts my eyes." □

BlackBerry sues startup founded by Ryan Seacrest

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Troubled smartphone maker BlackBerry Ltd. is accusing a company backed by "American Idol" host Ryan Seacrest of being a rip-off artist. The allegations emerged in a patent infringement lawsuit filed Friday in a San Francisco federal court by BlackBerry. The suit targets an iPhone keyboard made by Typo Products LLC, a Los Angeles startup co-founded by Seacrest and entrepreneur

Laurence Hallier.

The complaint contends that Typo Products' keyboard for recent iPhone models illegally copies technology and designs that BlackBerry pioneered years ago for its line of smartphones. BlackBerry is seeking unspecified damages and a court order that would prevent Typo Products from selling the keyboard without a licensing agreement. Typo Products didn't immediately re-

spond to requests for comment. The keyboard in dispute hasn't hit the market yet, though Typo Products has been taking early orders for the \$99 accessory on its website and says it's meant to ship in January. It's designed to slip on to the iPhone 5 and iPhone 5S so it can serve as a substitute for the touch-screen keyboard built into the software on those devices.

The physical keyboards on BlackBerry's phones

helped reshape the way that people used mobile devices. But those phones have been waning in popularity since Apple Inc. released the first iPhone in 2007, threatening BlackBerry's survival. As part of its efforts to adapt, BlackBerry has introduced smartphones featuring touch-screen keyboards, but the Canadian company is still struggling after suffering a \$4.4 billion loss in its most recent quarter.

BlackBerry still sells phones with physical keyboards that the company now says are being cloned by Typo Products.

"We are flattered by the desire to graft our keyboard onto other smartphones, but we will not tolerate such activity without fair compensation for using our intellectual property and our technological innovations," said Steve Zipperstein, BlackBerry's general counsel. □

S&P 500 starts 2014 with a 2-day decline

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — After last year's big party in the stock market, 2014 is starting off with a nagging hangover. The Standard & Poor's 500 index edged a fraction of a point lower on Friday, beginning a year with a two-day losing streak for the first time since 2005.

While few analysts expect 2014 to produce gains comparable to last year's advance of nearly 30 percent, many see a moderate increase as the economy continues to improve and investors move funds out of bonds and into stocks, which are generating much bigger returns for investors.

"The market is trying to find some direction here," said Scott Wren, a senior equity strategist at Wells Fargo Advisors. "We're in for a few days of trying to figure out whether we inch a little higher or see some down days." The S&P 500 index fell 0.61 points, or 0.03 per-

cent, to 1,831.37 and was 0.5 percent lower for the week.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 28.64

er fell \$1.38, or 3.4 percent, to \$39.57 after reporting a U.S. sale slump of more than 6 percent in December.

economy drove the dollar higher, which hurts oil, and signs emerged of ample supply worldwide. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke on Friday predicted stronger growth in 2014 and said that factors that have kept the economy from accelerating appear to be abating.

"The combination of financial healing, greater balance in the housing market, less fiscal restraint, and, of course, continued monetary accommodation bodes well for U.S. economic growth in coming quarters," Bernanke said in comments to the annual meeting of the American Economic Association in Philadelphia. The encouraging economic backdrop is one reason for investors to remain positive about stocks, despite the slow start to the year, said Bill Barker, a senior portfolio analyst at Motley Fool Funds, which manages about \$600 million in stock mutual funds. □



Donald Civitanova, a floor official with Knight Capital, works at the New York Stock Exchange. After last year's big party in the stock market, 2014 is starting off with a nagging hangover.
 (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

points, or 0.2 percent, to 16,469.99. The Nasdaq composite fell 11.16 points, or 0.3 percent, to 4,131.91. General Motors was among the stocks that posted the biggest losses in the S&P 500. The automak-

Energy companies have also started the year with declines as the price of oil falls. On Friday, oil extended a weeklong skid by falling \$1.48, or 1.6 percent, to \$93.96 a barrel. A strengthening U.S.

AT&T offers credit to leave T-Mobile US

BRIAN X. CHEN
© 2014 New York Times

It has become clear that AT&T views T-Mobile US, a smaller carrier, as a threat. AT&T on Friday made an announcement aimed squarely at T-Mobile customers: If they switch to AT&T from T-Mobile, they can receive up to \$450 in credit to spend on devices or services.

To receive up to \$250 in credit, T-Mobile customers will have to trade in their smartphone. The trade-in value will depend on the type of phone and its condition.

Then, T-Mobile customers can get \$200 more credit after selecting either an AT&T plan called Next, which gives customers a chance to upgrade to a new phone after one year, or its Mobile Share Value plan, its contract-free plan. (Customers don't get the credit if they sign up for a traditional, two-year contract.)

The move is a preemptive strike. T-Mobile is widely expected to announce next week at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas that it will cover the costs of customers' termination fees when they switch over to T-Mobile.

In 2013, T-Mobile shook up the U.S. wireless industry with what it calls the "Un-carrier" campaign. Its general strategy is to lure customers away from competitors by addressing the things that make people angry about their carrier. For instance, T-Mobile moved away from traditional two-year contracts for phone plans, and later it made it cheaper to take a smartphone abroad by eliminating roaming fees.

T-Mobile has been quickly rebounding. In August, T-Mobile said it had added 1.1 million subscribers. The upswing was its largest customer growth in four years. It is unclear whether T-Mobile is luring many subscribers away from AT&T. □

Coca-Cola raising its bet on carbonated water

David Kaplan
© 2013 Houston Chronicle

As consumers increasingly forgo regular and diet sodas over health concerns, Coca-Cola is raising its bet on one of the beverage industry's few growth areas: carbonated water.

Coke's Gulfgate-area plant is one of the facilities producing Dasani Sparkling Water, in flavored and unflavored varieties. The new product recently went on sale at select Sam's Clubs, including nine local stores, ahead of a national rollout in February.

The 12-ounce aluminum cans and 20-ounce and 1-liter bottles will compete with such market leaders as LaCroix in a small segment that is outperforming the rest of the nonalcoholic beverage industry.

Soda sales are down and other market categories are stagnant. Last year, for the first time, diet soda sales declined faster than the overall category because of consumer concerns about artificial sweeteners,

said Esther Kwon, an equity analyst at S&P Capital IQ. "Americans are looking to switch from artificially sweetened beverages



Advertising for Coca-Cola is seen at a shop in Mexico. As consumers increasingly forgo regular and diet sodas over health concerns, Coca-Cola is raising its bet on one of the beverage industry's few growth areas: carbonated water.
 (A. Zehbrauskas/The New York Times)

and cut calories," said spokeswoman Vanessa Walker of Fort Lauderdale-based National Beverage Corp., makers of LaCroix. Coca-Cola, by far the

leading seller of sparkling beverages in the Houston area, employs more than 1,600 people in two distribution and nine produc-

selling Seagram's Sparkling Seltzer Water in bottles and cans.

But company spokeswoman Nancy Bailey said the company decided to introduce Dasani Sparkling Water to take advantage of the brand's strong identity.

John Sicher, editor and publisher of the trade publication Beverage Digest, said said Coke and Pepsi both are investing more in sparkling water.

The shift comes as Harvard School of Public Health reports that consumption of sugary drinks is a major contributor to obesity. First Lady Michelle Obama is among the healthy lifestyle advocates encouraging Americans to cut back on sugar and drink more water.

Dasani Sparkling Water has no sweeteners and comes either unflavored or naturally flavored with lime, lemon, berry and apple. It is produced by adding carbonation to purified water. □

tion facilities and the Minute Maid headquarters in Sugar Land. The company reports a local payroll of \$15 million. Coke already has been

Ebullience over 2013 IPO market to spill over

MICHAEL J. de la MERCED
© 2014 New York Times

The next 12 months may not prove as rich for initial public offerings as the last year. But to Wall Street bankers, 2014 still promises an abundance of opportunity.

And that could include what may be one of the biggest market debuts in years: that of Alibaba, the Chinese Internet behemoth.

Even as global merger activity turned in another lackluster performance, the business of taking companies public soared. The amount raised by IPOs in the United States in 2013 jumped 40 percent over 2012, to \$59.3 billion, according to data from Thomson Reuters.

Overall activity in equity capital markets banking totaled nearly \$797 billion for the year, up 27 percent and one of the best years in recent memory. Fees for bankers in the field rose 34 percent from the previous year, to \$17.9 billion, in what Thomson Reuters described as the highest level in three years.

The FTSE Renaissance Global IPO Index, which tracks the returns of newly public shares, returned 31.7 percent last year through Dec. 17, outstripping the MSCI All Country World Index's 15.4 percent.

Advisers are quick to caution that such a run - one with a number of big stock market debuts, like those of Hilton Worldwide, the animal health company Zoetis and, of course, Twitter - will be hard to duplicate. But as long as the economy holds up, so will the stock markets, prompting private companies to look to share sales to raise money.

"I would be surprised if the overall market is up 25 percent or more next year, but I'm optimistic and think it's still trending upward," John S. Daly, the head of Americas equity capital markets at Goldman Sachs, said.

Behind the IPO boom are the usual factors, bankers say. Encouraging economic conditions drove impres-

sive stock market growth, particularly in the U.S. (Last year was the first time since 2004 that the highest share of IPO proceeds were raised in North America, at 34 percent.)

Investors proved especially eager to buy into new stocks: The flow of money into stock mutual funds outpaced money going into bond funds last year,

companies were the majority, according to Renaissance Capital. Even sectors that had fallen out of favor, like biotechnology companies, look poised to recover. For many investors, the most attractive type of investment remains companies that are poised for double-digit revenue growth. A new crop of technology startups that

founder, Jack Ma, and its executive vice chairman, Joseph Tsai.

Fevered speculation about Alibaba's potential market value has only increased, with bankers and analysts now guessing that the company could fetch a valuation of more than \$150 billion.

Other companies expected to go public are not



Aaron Levie, chief executive of Box, a large online data storage firm, at the firm's headquarters in Los Altos, Calif. Box is expected by analysts to go public in 2014, one of a number of potential tech-sector initial public offerings that have investment banks feeling confident following a year in which IPOs outshone merger activity as a source of business for Wall Street.

(Peter DaSilva/The New York Times)

providing a big source of capital waiting to be spent on new offerings.

What switched last year "is that the economy is improving and that there's a lot less risk of a big downward shock," Cully Davis, a managing director of equity capital markets at Credit Suisse, said. "Investors' risk tolerance changed."

At the same time, Daly said, investors have been disciplined about what they have been willing to pay for IPOs.

The presence of ready buyers has prompted a spate of entities, including corporations looking to spin off divisions and private startups looking to seize on years of work and rising hype. Bankers say that the backlog of IPOs is strong, if not nearly bursting.

The boom has been fairly evenly spread, though financial and consumer

many analysts and bankers predict may go public in 2014 fits neatly into that mold, even if none will equal Facebook's \$16 billion offering or draw as much attention as Twitter's. Among them are Dropbox and Box, two of the big online storage companies, and the Lending Club, the biggest player in the peer-to-peer lending industry.

But the most highly anticipated offering is that of Alibaba, whose vast e-commerce operations make the company a Chinese amalgam of Amazon, eBay and a host of others. The Internet giant has not picked bankers for its forthcoming offering, according to people briefed on the matter, but that has not stopped an army of senior-level deal-makers from making regular trips to Hong Kong to pay their respects to the company's

considered high-growth stories, but nevertheless have strong financial performance that could draw investors all the same.

Ally Financial, the lender that once was General Motors' financing arm, is among those weighing a potential IPO to help repay its government bailout, according to people briefed on the matter. And General Electric plans to spin off its huge consumer finance arm.

Private equity firms have also been eager to seize on the roaring markets to sell their investments. Last year, the Blackstone Group took a number of its portfolio companies public, including Hilton and SeaWorld.

Such firms often do not sell any shares in the IPO; Blackstone sold none of its shares in Hilton when the company went public in December. □

Crude falls for 4th day, below \$95 per barrel

The Associated Press

The price of oil fell for the fourth consecutive day, below \$95 a barrel, as a rebounding U.S. economy drove the dollar higher and signs continue to emerge that there is an ample supply of crude worldwide.

Benchmark U.S. oil for February delivery fell 97 cents to \$94.47 a barrel in mid-day trading. Brent crude, used to price international crude processed by many U.S. refineries, fell 86 cents to \$106.92 a barrel in London.

U.S. crude fell by \$2.98 on Thursday, the biggest one-day drop since November of 2012. Prices have been dropping sharply since last Friday, when a barrel closed above \$100 for first time since October.

A financial recovery in the U.S. would typically drive commodities higher, given the appetite of the world's largest economy. But that recovery has been driven in part by a massive bond-buying program at the Federal Reserve.

The Fed recently began winding that program down, however, and that is pushing the value of the dollar even higher.

A stronger dollar makes commodities such as oil that are priced in dollars more expensive for buyers using other currencies.

Demand is rising, but supplies appear to be sufficient. The Energy Department reported Friday that average petroleum demand over the past four weeks rose 3.3 percent compared with last year. While oil stocks fell by 7 million barrels, that is "above the upper limit of the average range for this time of year," according to the weekly status report.

The national average retail price of gasoline edged up less than a penny to \$3.33 per gallon, according to AAA, OPIS and Wright Express. That's the highest level ever for this time of year — 5 cents higher than last week and 4 cents higher than a year ago. □

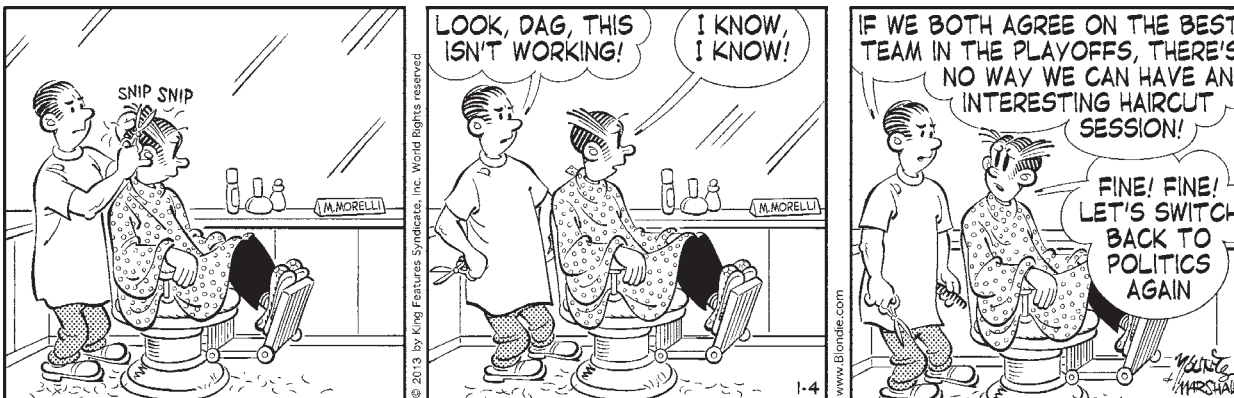
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



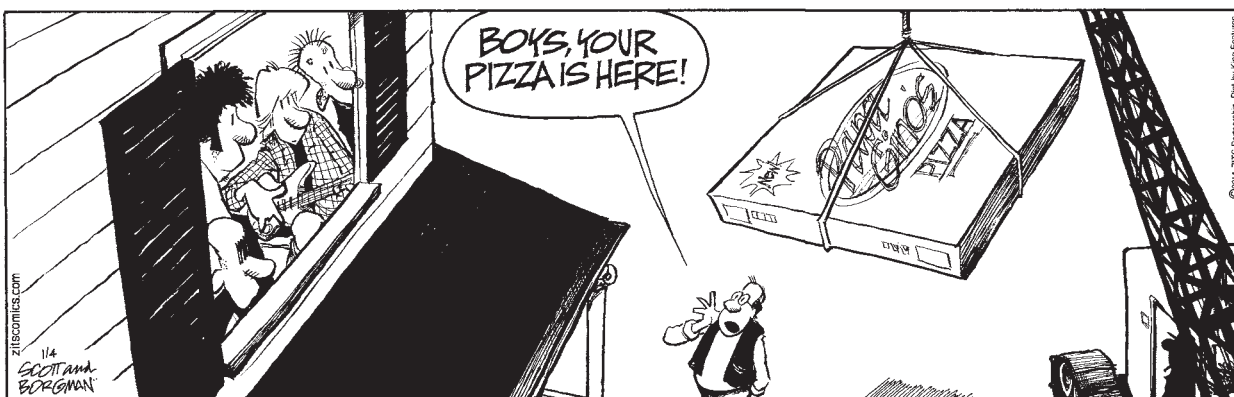
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	7					4		
5					9			
			3	2	5			9
		6				5	8	
		2				9		
	9	7				3		
6			8	5	1			
			4					1
		5					2	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

1/04

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

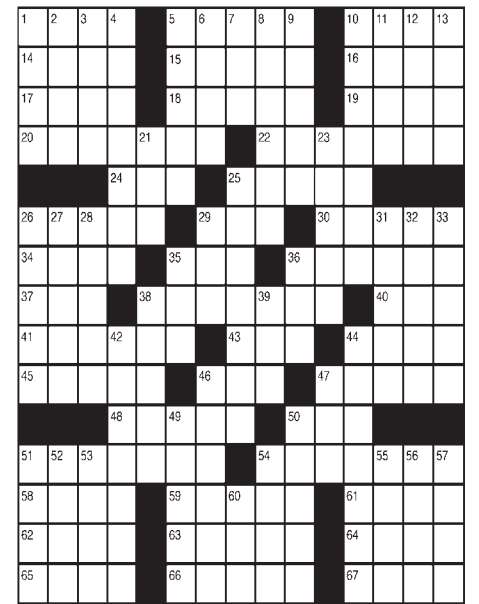
8	7	9	1	4	5	6	3	2
3	5	1	9	6	2	7	4	8
2	6	4	7	3	8	1	9	5
4	8	5	3	9	1	2	7	6
1	2	7	6	8	4	3	5	9
6	9	3	2	5	7	4	8	1
5	1	8	4	2	3	9	6	7
7	4	6	5	1	9	8	2	3
9	3	2	8	7	6	5	1	4

ACROSS

- Rib or femur
- Blazing
- Take a break
- High point
- Obama's VP
- "...and they lived happily after."
- Hold on to
- German sub
- Contemptible
- Eternal
- Filmmaker Cecil B. ...
- Stein contents
- Danger
- Assert one's right to
- Mayo container
- Bursting at the ...; very full
- Choir selection
- Broadcast
- Inlet between Asia and Africa
- Tax-deferred retirement acct.
- Dispute settler
- Actor Holbrook
- Get comfy
- Assist
- Satan's domain
- Valuable item
- That woman
- Finicky
- Marathons
- Wicked
- Mixed with a spoon
- Interferes
- Streambed
- Fencing sword
- Opera box
- Wheel rod
- Lopsided
- Border
- Coffin platform
- Tenants' payments
- Writing table

DOWN

- Cake recipe verb
- Not locked
- "...I say more?"



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/4/14

Friday's Puzzle Solved

GERM	MALTA	GLAD
OAHU	AGAIN	YOGI
BRIM	DONNY	BROOK
INN	MANE	RANGE
ENEMY	CAT	
ASSUME	JOSEPH	
LOTTO	PLEAS	RIP
PROS	FLEET	DELI
SEN	DROOP	RIFLE
REVIEW	DURESS	
IVE	PETER	
DITTO	SHAH	ELS
IRRATIONAL	SNIP	
COOL	RAISE	ACME
ENDS	AFTER	DEAD

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1/4/14

- Classic gift for Father's Day
- Jack Russell ...; popular dog
- Crowded together
- Calm or quiet
- Passing craze
- Actor Romero
- Lahr and Parks
- Q-tip, for one
- Cab
- Not working
- Dissolve
- Ore deposit
- Breakfast order
- Look for
- Container

A tablet that comes with its own penguins



In an undated handout image, the DreamTab, a planned tablet computer collaboration between Fuhu and DreamWorks Animation. Fuhu, makers of the popular Nabi children's tablet, hopes the DreamTab will stand out in an increasingly saturated market, while DreamWorks hopes it will be a platform to reach children with new cartoons based on the studio's hit movies on a daily basis. (Handout via The New York Times)

BROOKS BARNES

© 2014 New York Times

GLENDAL, Calif. - DreamWorks Animation first captivated children in movie theaters. Then it branched into TV, piping cartoons based on hits like "Madagascar" and "How to Train Your Dragon" into homes through outlets like Nickelodeon and Netflix.

Now DreamWorks has partnered with a technology company, Fuhu, on an even more immediate way to reach itty-bitty eyeballs, a highly coveted audience: a tablet computer for children that the studio will be able to program much like a cable channel. "We could push out a new character moment every day of the year," said Jim Mainard, head of digital strategy and new business development for DreamWorks.

DreamWorks and Fuhu, which makes the popular Nabi line of children's tablets, plan to introduce the product, called the DreamTab, at the International Consumer Electronics Show, which starts Tuesday in Las Vegas.

The tablets will be sold with a range of DreamWorks-branded accessories, including headphones, protective bumpers and carrying cases. An 8-inch version of the DreamTab will arrive in stores in the spring. Pricing is still being determined

but it will be less than \$300, a Fuhu spokesman said. A 12-inch version is also planned. Fuhu's strategic goal with the DreamTab is differentiation - coming up with a way to persuade parents to buy its product over a competing one. DreamWorks is hoping to find a new way into the home, deepening its reputation as an innovative content creator and funneling more viewers to its programs and movies and selling more merchandise. "By teaming with DreamWorks to create a device that will have original content - original content that is automatically and frequently updated - we are not following consumers, we are getting ahead of them," said Jim Mitchell, Fuhu's chief executive.

There are all sorts of branded tablets, of course. Fuhu in October introduced a special-edition Disney Nabi and Nickelodeon Nabi. But neither of those offered original and exclusive programming like the DreamTab will. Unlike some other tablets, the DreamTab will not lock children into a DreamWorks-only world. The studio's video content and games are the most prominent, but users can also stream shows from Nickelodeon, Disney and Cartoon Network.

Nancy Bernstein, a movie producer who is in charge of creating what she calls "character moments" for the DreamTab, insists that the effort is not simply an advertising opportunity for the studio. Turn on the tablet, for instance, and penguins from the "Madagascar" franchise might greet you with a silly dance. Depending on how parents have set the timing controls, "Shrek" characters might appear in a skit to announce that it is time to power down. "All of this animation was custom-created," Bernstein said in a demonstration at DreamWorks' headquarters here. □

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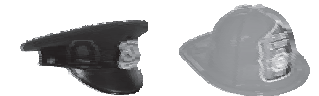
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Vitamin E may slow Alzheimer's disease progression

MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP Chief Medical Writer

Researchers say vitamin E might slow the progression of mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's disease — the first time any treatment has been shown to alter the course of dementia at that stage.

In a study of more than 600 older veterans, high doses of the vitamin delayed the decline in daily living skills, such as making meals, getting dressed and holding a conversation, by about six months over a two-year period.

The benefit was equivalent to keeping one major skill that otherwise would have been lost, such as being able to bathe without help. For some people, that could mean living independently rather than needing a nursing home. Vitamin E did not preserve thinking abilities, though, and it did no good for patients who took it with another Alzheimer's medication. But those taking vitamin E alone required less help from caregivers — about two fewer hours each day than some others in the study.

"It's not a miracle or, obviously, a cure," said study leader Dr. Maurice Dysken of the Minneapolis VA Health Care System. "The best we can do at this point is slow down the rate of progression."

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs sponsored the study, published Tuesday by the Journal of the American Medical Association.

No one should rush out and buy vitamin E, several doctors warned. It failed to prevent healthy people from developing dementia or to help those with mild impairment ("pre-Alzheimer's") in other stud-



In this Feb. 6, 2012, file photo, Alexis McKenzie, right, executive director of The Methodist Home of the District of Columbia Forest Side, an Alzheimer's assisted-living facility in Washington, puts her hand on the arm of a resident. Associated Press

ies, and one suggested it might even be harmful. Still, many experts cheered the new results after so many recent flops of once-promising drugs.

"This is truly a breakthrough paper and constitutes what we have been working toward for nearly three decades: the first truly disease-modifying intervention for Alzheimer's," said Dr. Sam Gandy of Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. "I am very enthusiastic about the results." About 35 million people worldwide have dementia, and Alzheimer's is the most common type. In the U.S., about 5

million have Alzheimer's. There is no cure and current medicines just temporarily ease symptoms.

Researchers don't know how vitamin E might help, but it is an antioxidant, like those found in red wine, grapes and some teas. Antioxidants help protect cells from damage that can contribute to other diseases, says the federal Office on Dietary Supplements. Many foods contain vitamin E, such as nuts, seeds, grains, leafy greens and vegetable oils. There are many forms, and the study tested a synthetic version of one — alpha-tocopherol — at

a pharmaceutical grade and strength, 2,000 international units a day.

Years ago, another study found that the same form and dose helped people with more advanced Alzheimer's, and many were prescribed it. But vitamin E fell out of favor after a 2005 analysis of many studies found that those taking more than 400 units a day were more likely to die of any cause.

The new study involved 613 veterans, nearly all male, 79 years old on average, with mild to moderate Alzheimer's, at 14 VA centers. All were already taking Aricept, Razadyne

or Exelon — widely used, similar dementia medicines.

Participants were placed in four groups and given either vitamin E, another dementia medicine called memantine (its brand name is Namenda), both pills or dummy pills.

After a little more than two years of follow-up, those on vitamin E alone had a 19 percent lower annual rate of decline in daily living skills compared to the placebo group. Memantine made no difference, and vitamin E did not affect several tests of thinking skills. "It's a subtle effect but it's probably real," Dr. Ron Petersen, the Mayo Clinic's Alzheimer's research chief, said of the benefit on daily living from vitamin E. "That has to be weighed against the potential risks" seen in earlier studies, he said. Heather Snyder, director of medical and scientific operations for the Alzheimer's Association, said the group's position is that "no one should take vitamin E for Alzheimer's disease or other memory issues except under the supervision of a physician," because it can interfere with blood thinners, cholesterol drugs and other medicines.

The new results also need to be verified in a fresh study that includes more women and minorities, she said. □

Tomb of ancient Egyptian beer brewer unearthed

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's minister of antiquities says Japanese archeologists have unearthed the tomb

of an ancient beer brewer in the city of Luxor that is more than 3,000 years old. Mohammed Ibrahim says Friday the tomb dates back to the Ramesside period and belongs to the chief "maker of beer for gods of the dead" who was also the head of a warehouse. He added that the walls of the tomb's chambers contain "fabulous designs and colors, reflecting details of daily life ... along with their



This image released by the Supreme Council of Antiquities shows colored inscriptions on a newly discovered tomb in Luxor, Egypt, Friday, Jan. 3, 2014. Associated Press

religious rituals." The head of the Japanese team, Jiro Kondo, says the tomb was discovered during work near another

tomb belonging to a statesman under Amenhotep III, grandfather of the famed boy-pharaoh Tutankhamun. □

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Car in Walker crash may have been going 100 mph

ANDREW DALTON

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Porsche carrying "Fast & Furious" star Paul Walker may have been going 100 mph (160 kph) or more before it crashed, killing both Walker and the driver, according to a coroner's report released Friday. Investigators found no mechanical problems with the 2005 Porsche Carrera GT or debris or other problems on the roadway. The street forms an approximately 1-mile (1.6-kilometer) loop amid industrial office parks and is rimmed by hills and isolated from traffic, especially on weekends. The downed light pole the car hit had a speed limit sign of 45 mph (72 kph). The area in Santa Clarita is about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

Roger Rodas, Walker's friend and financial adviser, was driving the Porsche at an unsafe speed, and

witnesses interviewed by deputies estimated it was going 100 mph (160 kph) or more.

No alcohol or drugs were detected in the system of either man on the day of the fiery one-car crash.

The Nov. 30 deaths were ruled accidents and were due to combined traumatic and thermal injuries, the report said. It said both men were burned over 100 percent of their bodies.

Rodas had fourth-degree burns on his head and neck and severe skull fractures, the report said.

Walker had broken bones throughout his body including his jaw, arm, ribs and pelvis, it said.

The car slammed into a tree and a light pole on the driver's side then after spinning, hit a second tree on Walker's side of the car and caught fire.

The report says the red Porsche was traveling "at an unsafe speed, approximately 100+ mph," accord-

ing to a deputy who took testimony from witnesses at the scene.

"For unknown reasons, the driver lost control of his vehicle," the report says.

The Sheriff's Department had previously cited speed as a factor in the crash, but had released no estimate of how fast the Porsche was going.

Sheriff's investigators are working with Porsche officials and the California Highway Patrol to determine the speed more exactly. Three data recorders survived the crash and fire and may produce information to pinpoint the speed. Rodas, 38, and Walker, 40, co-owned an auto racing team. Rodas also was a professional driver who competed in 10 Pirelli World Challenge GTS races last year.

The accident occurred while Walker was on a break after shooting about half of "Fast & Furious 7," whose release Universal



In this April 29, 2011 file photo, actor Paul Walker poses during the photo call of the movie "Fast and Furious 5," in Rome.

Associated Press

Pictures has now delayed for almost a year to April 2015.

Walker still will appear in the film, though Universal has not said exactly how it will handle his unfinished performance.

Also Friday, two men pleaded not guilty to stealing a roof panel of the wrecked Porsche from the tow truck

removing it from the accident scene.

Anthony Edward Janow, 25, and James Brooks Witty, 18, were each charged with felony counts of grand theft and misdemeanor counts of destroying evidence and resisting or obstructing a peace officer. They are due to return to court Feb. 25. □

Writer, Doyle estate dispute copyright on Sherlock



This 1930 photo shows Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the author and creator of Sherlock Holmes.

Associated Press

JASON KEYSER

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — It's the kind of puzzle that might have amused Sherlock Holmes himself.

Now that copyright protections have expired on nearly all of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's tales about the pipe-puffing detective in the deerstalker hat, are

writers free to depict the character in new mysteries without seeking permission or paying license fees?

A federal judge in Chicago says yes, so long as they don't stray into territory covered in the 10 stories still protected by copyright. Not so fast, says the Doyle estate, which is considering an appeal this month. Descendants of the Scottish physician and author argue he continued to develop the characters of Holmes and Dr. Watson in the later works so they should remain off-limits until the remaining copyrights run out at the end of 2022.

"It's a bogus argument. It means you can reprint Conan Doyle's own stories freely but you can't make up a new story? It doesn't make logical sense," said author Leslie Klinger, who brought the case against the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd. to settle the matter.

With last week's ruling in hand, Klinger plans to finish work on "In the Company of Sherlock Holmes,"

a book of original short stories featuring characters and other elements from Conan Doyle's work. He is co-editing the book with plans to publish this fall.

If appeals judges hold it up, the ruling could lift the threat of legal action for the untold scores of writers out there churning out pastiches and fan fiction without permission. Most of them fly under the radar. In Klinger's case, the estate demanded \$5,000, he said.

"Whatever decision they make will essentially determine the fate of many characters, not just Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, but very intricate characters such as James Bond. ... What happens as copyrights expire on Ian Fleming's original stories?" said Doyle estate attorney William Zieske.

The ruling could also weaken the value of the Sherlock franchise to the point that major publishers and movie producers could also decide to move ahead with projects without licensing

deals, said Paul Supnik, a Beverly Hills, California, attorney specializing in copyright and entertainment law who was not connected with the case.

"At the very least it's going to affect the bargaining power as to what the estate can do in trying to sell it to the studio," Supnik said. At the heart of the dispute is whether a character can be copyright protected over an entire series of works. The Doyle estate argues that a basic element of copyright law allows for that if the character is highly delineated, as opposed to a two-dimensional cartoon-like character who doesn't change much over time.

In ruling against the estate, Judge Ruben Castillo called that a "novel legal argument" that was "counter to the goals of the Copyright Act." The lawsuit was filed in Chicago because a literary agent for the Doyle estate is based in Illinois. There's no question that Holmes and Watson are

highly complex characters. Conan Doyle produced a total of four Sherlock Holmes novels and 56 stories between 1887 and 1927.

Klinger argues that everything you really need to know about Holmes and Watson is in the novels and stories published before 1923 that are in the public domain in the U.S. That includes their family backgrounds, education and a slew of character traits: Holmes' Bohemian nature and cocaine use, erratic eating habits, his Baker Street lodgings, his methods of reasoning, his clever use of disguise, his skill in chemistry and even his weapon of choice, a loaded hunting crop.

"Everything that the lay person would think of as being a characteristic of Holmes or Watson is in those pre-1923 stories," said Klinger, who is also an attorney and lives in Malibu, California. "In fact, some would say you could pick up almost everything you need from the very first story." □

MSNBC's Roberts named host of 'Way Too Early'

NEW YORK (AP) — MSNBC's Thomas Roberts will be getting used to early hours as the new host of the network's "Way Too Early" program.

The cable network on Friday gave Roberts the job as anchor of the newscast, which airs from 5:30 a.m. to 6 a.m. Eastern just before "Morning Joe." Roberts will also be a contributor to "Morning Joe."

The irreverent "Way Too Early" was a springboard for former host Willie Geist, who is now a regular on "Morning Joe" and hosts an hour of NBC's "Today" show.

Roberts will give up his current 11 a.m. anchoring slot, a post that hasn't been filled yet. □



In this Nov. 21, 2011 file photo, MSNBC anchor Thomas Roberts arrives for the International Emmy Awards in New York.

Associated Press

Eve engaged to designer Maximillion Cooper

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rap-per-actress Eve is engaged to 41-year-old British designer Maximillion Cooper. A spokeswoman for Eve says Cooper, who founded the international motor rally Gumball 3000, popped the question on Christmas Day.

Eve wore a large sparkler on her wedding finger in a photo posted on her Instagram page on Monday. The 35-year-old entertainer told fans via Twitter on Tuesday that she wanted to celebrate with her family and friends before announcing her engagement.

The couple, who met at Gumball 3000 and have been dating for over three years, live together in London where Eve recorded her fourth album, "Lip Lock," released in May.

This will be Eve's first marriage and the second for Cooper, who has four



In this Oct. 5, 2013 file photo, recording artist Eve and entrepreneur Maximillion Cooper attend the Tony Hawk's 10th Annual Stand in Beverly Hills, Calif. The rapper-actress is engaged.

Associated Press

children from his previous relationship. □

After cancer diagnosis, Broadway star fights back



In this May 1, 2013 file photo, Valisia LeKae attends the 2013 Tony Awards Meet the Nominees press reception in New York.

Associated Press

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Valisia LeKae has a New Year's resolution that has nothing to do with weight loss, money or watching less TV. "I will be cancer-free in 2014," she's vowed.

The budding Broadway star who played Diana Ross in the hit show "Motown the Musical" was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in late 2013. She went through surgery and this week endured the first of six planned rounds of chemotherapy.

The 34-year-old who was raised in Memphis, Tenn., and attended the University of Tennessee had to pull out of the musical and refocus her life on beating the disease, something she's done with grace and wit.

"I lost my ovary. I don't need to lose my sense of humor," she says. "I have learned to really surrender. Cancer was not something that I was expecting in my life."

About 220,000 new cases of ovarian cancer are diagnosed each year around the world, and it causes 140,000 deaths. In the United States, the Na-

tional Cancer Institute estimates 22,000 new cases and 15,000 deaths each year.

LeKae was stunned by the diagnosis after undergoing surgery to remove what was believed to be a benign cyst from one of her ovaries in November. Ovarian cancer is more common among white, post-menopausal women, and LeKae says she has no family history of the disease.

"Cancer does not discriminate, regardless of if it's in your family or not," she says. "Cancer doesn't care if you're starring on Broadway or in a movie. Or that you're Angelina Jolie."

She's taken her battle public in the hope that her diagnosis can help others. LeKae urges women to see their doctor regularly. She wants them to point out things that feel abnormal and to seek out second opinions.

"Even if I can change one person's mind about either going in for their checkups — male and female — that is a huge thing," she says. "It's very important for people of all ages to be proactive. You're never too young to have a physi-

cal. It's better to fight than have fear."

Cancer came just as LeKae, who had been an understudy or swing in four other Broadway shows, was making her debut as a leading lady and had earned a Tony Award nomination. She's become a vegan who concentrates on her white blood count and endures a long list of doctor visits.

"I think God has given me a different role to play at this time," she says with a laugh. "This has sort of become the new movie that I'm in. God being the producer and my doctors being the directors. And I am the star of the show."

A classic hard-charging, highly organized type-A, LeKae has had to switch gears. "I'm finding strength in allowing others to help me. I'm so not used to it. I do not like bothering people," she says. "But I know there will be days where I won't be able to get up and make myself a meal and I'm going to have to learn to ask for help. I'm finding great peace in that, knowing that I don't have to carry this burden alone."

Dr. David Fishman, LeKae's gynecological oncologist who is director of the National Ovarian Cancer Early Detection Program at The Mount Sinai Medical Center, has been impressed by her desire to share her experience.

"That's what a hero does — help other people. She has the courage to want to make a difference and I know that she will," he said. "I'm very optimistic she's going to do very well."

While there is no effective screening yet for ovarian cancer, Fishman advises all women to learn their family's history with cancer and make it known to their health care provider. Any pelvic pain over a week needs to be discussed with a physician and Fishman hopes those talks include ovary health. □

Final Year-End Quiz



GAIL COLLINS
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One of the great things about being in a new year is getting to wipe 2013 from our minds. Completely. Forever. Except maybe this one last, final, end-of-the-year quiz. (Coming tomorrow maybe. 2014: What's Gone Wrong So Far?)

1) North Korea announced the execution of leader Kim Jong Un's uncle and former mentor, explaining that, among other crimes, Jang Song Thaek had been guilty of:

- A) Insulting Dennis Rodman.
- B) Failing to send Kim a birthday card.
- C) Singing off key.
- D) Half-heartedly clapping.

2) After the death of Nelson Mandela, former presidential candidate Rick Santorum said the late South African leader should inspire us to:

- A) Fight against racial discrimination.
- B) Fight against poverty.
- C) Fight against Obamacare.
- D) Fight to save South Africa's endangered Table Mountain ghost frog.

3) The House Committee on Science, Space and Technology:

- A) Has a chairman who is worried about "global warming alarmists."
- B) Has a science subcommittee chairman who believes the theory of evolution and the Big Bang theory are "lies straight from the pit of hell."
- C) Recently held a hearing on extraterrestrial life.
- D) All the above.

4) Toward the end of the last big Senate debate of the old year, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., emotionally declared that: "Like the frog in the warming water, we do not realize we are being cooked and that the freedoms of Americans are being cooked!" He was talking about:

- A) Global warming.
- B) A problem with the Capitol heating system.
- C) The Senate rules.
- D) People who made 2013 such a bad year for Paula Deen.

5) Speaker John Boehner said recently that the immigration reform bill is:

- A) "Absolutely not" dead.
- B) "Probably not" dead.
- C) "Deader than a doornail."
- D) "Alive and well and living in Switzerland."

6) Which of the following did McDonald's not do in 2013?

- A) Offered its employees advice on how much to tip their personal fitness trainer or pool cleaner.
- B) Got stuck with 10 million pounds of unsold Mighty Wings.
- C) Offered its employees budgeting tips with a planner that presumes they're working two jobs.
- D) Put Ronald McDonald on part-time status.

7) This year Amazon announced it was thinking about:

- A) Creating a fleet of drones.
- B) Taking over the world.
- C) Delivering babies.
- D) Raising its number of waffle iron options from 613 to something in the five figures.

8) Natalie Tennant, the leading candidate for the Democratic nomination for Senate in West Virginia, was the first woman chosen to perform as the Mountaineer, the mascot of the West Virginia University football team. When she hit the field, people in the stands would:

- A) Yell extra loud at the sight of a path-breaking woman.
- B) Cry: "Run for the U.S. Senate when Jay Rockefeller retires!"
- C) Throw cups and chant: "We don't want a mountain deer. Bring us back our Mountaineer."
- D) Behave pretty much the same as usual.

9) Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, recently told ABC News that he did something during his first year in office that "no one" else in Washington does. He explained that it was:

- A) Appearing as dwarf prince Thorin Oakenshield in "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug."
- B) Irritating John McCain more than Barack Obama ever did.
- C) "Trying to do my best not to pay attention to the politics, to focus on fixing the problems."
- D) Making preparations to renounce his Canadian citizenship.

10) In her latest book, Sarah Palin says Todd's favorite present is always:

- A) A Sarah selfie.
- B) Duck whistles from the Dynasty boys.
- C) Gift cards for gas for his snow machine.
- D) Anything that's made in America.

ANSWERS: 1-D, 2-C, 3-D, 4-C, 5-A, 6-D, 7-A, 8-C, 9-C, 10-C. □



A Guide To Years Ending In 4



MARK BITTMAN
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War, famine, pestilence and death - the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse - have been well represented in years ending in "4," but probably not disproportionately so. A look at memorable moments in the last seven of these just might lead to optimism for the one that's upon us. Or not.

1944: Those of us who don't remember this year are lucky; a soldier cited in Rick Atkinson's brilliantly horrifying saga of the last two years of the war in Europe, "The Guns at Last Light," quotes King Lear: "The worst is not, So long as we can say, 'This is the worst.'" The end of the war was in sight; getting there was the trick, and millions were killed in the interval. Things have not been this bad since.

1954: If there was a golden era of U.S. foreign policy, it ended here, as Eisenhower warned against involvement in Vietnam while espousing the domino theory. Good: Joe McCarthy's power began to ebb.

Not good: The words "under God" were added to the Pledge of Allegiance.

1964: The last year of the baby boom was mind-blowing. In the 28 months beginning that January, Bob Dylan made five of the best albums of the era - and there were the Beatles. Nelson Mandela was sen-

tenced to life in prison, and Lyndon Johnson single-handedly sent everyone into a tizzy by signing the Civil Rights Act, sending more "advisers" to Vietnam, talking about bombing North Vietnam and proposing the Great Society. Huh? The first anti-Vietnam War demonstrations and draft-card burnings took place. Pot smoking officially began. (Not really, but sorta.)

The civil-rights workers Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney were found dead; just writing that gives me chills.

1974: The mid-'70s were glum. We can gloat about Nixon's resignation, though don't forget he founded the Environmental Protection Agency. Gerald Ford gave his predecessor a better deal than he gave draft evaders. He also determined that we needed to Whip Inflation Now, as oil passed \$10 a barrel. Everyone made jokes about him, with reason.

Patty Hearst was kidnapped. Ted Bundy disappeared many people. Augusto Pinochet declared himself "supreme chief" of Chile and disappeared many more.

The high point may have been the Ramones' debut at CBGB. 1984: Big Brother was not (yet) our biggest problem, but this was not a good year. President Ronald Reagan, presumably not yet stricken by Alzheimer's, remarked over an open mike that the bombing of Russia would begin "in five minutes." Geraldine Ferraro became a vice-presidential candidate, and lost. Margaret Thatcher went to war with miners, and won. Indira Gandhi was assassinated and a Union Carbide leak in Bhopal killed untold thousands. The virus that causes AIDS was discovered. People started smoking crack. And Marvin Gaye was shot and killed by his father.

1994: Whoa: Not only did Nelson Mandela not spend his life in jail, but he became president. The Brady Law went into

effect, and Bill Clinton signed the assault weapons ban. (It expired in 2004.) O.J. Simpson spurred a national obsession. Four bombers were convicted of the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center.

Reagan was implicated in the Iran-contra cover-up, but it seemed more important to torture the Clintons over a bad real estate investment. (Still, Paula Jones wasn't the Republicans' fault, was she?) Clinton fired Joycelyn Elders for discussing masturbation.

The first credit default swap was created. Nearly everyone in Rwanda became either a killer or a victim, or so it seemed.

And there was that messy thing in "the former Yugoslavia."

Netscape Navigator was released.

2004: Barack Obama spoke at the Democratic convention and there seemed reason for hope; then John Kerry went windsurfing and W., incredibly, became president again (what were 62 million of us thinking?) several months after endorsing a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, which Massachusetts had already legalized. (By 2013, even Utah is on the right side of this issue.) W. also promised to improve education and access to health care; we all know how that worked out. Lance Armstrong won his sixth Tour de France; we all know how that worked out, too.

The Indian Ocean tsunami killed more than 230,000 people. Martha Stewart went to jail. And Johnny Ramone (born 1948) died.

2014: President Barack Obama is calling this the "year of action."

Here's hoping he's not bluffing and begins by demonstrating how popular progressive legislation is by circumventing Congress in areas of food, energy and climate change. The alternative could be a visit by the Four Horsemen. □

Democrats breaking Republican lock on Cuban vote

MICHAEL J. MISHAK

Associated Press

MIAMI/HAVANA (AP)—For more than two decades, running for Congress in this sun-soaked capital of Cuban exiles has required two things: a Republican registration card and a hard line toward the Castro regime.

So when Joe Garcia became the first Cuban-American Democrat from the state to win election to the House in 2012, it signaled a crack in a critical Republican constituency. In a break with the exile community, Garcia campaigned in support of loosening restrictions on Cuban-Americans who want to visit their relatives on the island or send them money. Since taking office, he has pushed for U.S. trials of a Cuba-developed diabetes treatment and for easing travel rules for Cuban diplomats who visit the U.S. And while Florida Republicans, including Sen. Marco Rubio, fumed when President Barack Obama shook hands with Cuban President Raul Castro last month, Garcia dismissed it as a simple courtesy.

"Sometimes a handshake is just a handshake," he said.

Not long ago, any gesture of comity toward Cuba's communist government would have been greeted in Florida with a closed fist — or a car bomb.

But three generations on from the revolution, Garcia represents a new breed of Cuban-American, more interested in pragmatism and reconciliation than regime change and isolation.

That generational shift is at the heart of a realignment that could help change U.S. policy toward Cuba and reshape the political landscape in the country's largest swing-voting state. The implications are particularly troubling for the Republican Party.

"It's very difficult for Republicans to win this state if they don't win a majority of the Hispanic vote," said Dario Moreno, a political scientist at Florida Interna-

tional University, "and to win a majority of the Hispanic vote, they have to do very well in the Cuban community."

In 2012, Obama captured nearly half of the Cuban-American vote in Florida, a record high for a Democrat. He has since pledged to "update" a U.S. policy that prohibits even the

In Florida, conservatives harbored plans for another armed incursion and dreams of returning to the island. But five decades of political stalemate have tempered that vision.

"We have gone from a politics of passion to a politics of realism," said Andy Gomez, a Cuba expert and former senior fellow

chain.

His family fled Cuba in the 1960s and 70s and are staunchly Republican, but he considers himself an independent.

"Democrats have great ideas. Republicans have great ideas too," he said. "You have to meet somewhere in the middle."

Republicans acknowledge

line views on the trade embargo and remains a popular figure in Florida.

Garcia's re-election campaign this year could be a potential test of how his divergent views on Cuba play among Cuban-Americans.

The 50-year-old son of Cuban exiles, Garcia grew up in Miami when there was



Rep. Joe Garcia, D-Fla. speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington. For more than two decades, running for Congress in this sun-soaked capital of Cuban exiles has required two things: a Republican registration card and a hard line toward the Castro regime. So when Garcia became the first Cuban-American Democrat from the state to win election to the House in 2012, it signaled a crack in a critical GOP constituency.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

most basic business dealings with the island.

"Keep in mind that when Castro came to power I was just born," he told supporters at a Miami fundraiser last year, "so the notion that the same policies that we put in place in 1961 would somehow still be as effective as they are today in the age of the Internet, Google and world travel doesn't make sense."

Cubans now make up about a third of Florida's fast-growing Hispanic population. For decades, they had voted reliably Republican, partly because of the party's anti-communism tenets. Democrats, led by President John F. Kennedy, had also headed up the botched 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, when 1,500 CIA-backed Cuban exiles tried but failed to overthrow the nascent Castro regime.

at the University of Miami's Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies. "We have come to the realization, like any immigrant group, that this is home."

Polls show new immigrants and younger Cuban-Americans are more motivated by domestic concerns, including health care, education and the economy, than by anti-communist fervor. A study by the Pew Hispanic Center found that Cubans are the Hispanic group most likely to say they have "only a little" or "almost nothing" in common with those living in their family's native country.

"You live here. You work here," said Luis Diaz, a 33-year-old businessman from Kendall, as he sipped a cup of cafe con leche at La Carreta, a local Cuban

the generational shift among Cuban-Americans but say recent election results are more a reflection of lackluster campaigns than political realignment. Mitt Romney, they say, failed to cultivate Hispanics. And Republican Rep. David Rivera fell to Garcia after he was dogged by state and federal investigations into his finances. "It's not the slam-dunk it was 20 years ago," said Al Cardenas, former head of the Florida Republican Party and chairman of the American Conservative Union. "At the same time, the Democrats haven't turned the corner and made the Cuban-American community a very competitive place yet."

Rubio, a Republican and the state's most prominent Cuban-American politician, holds traditional hard-

little tolerance for anything but the hardest of lines against Fidel Castro and the revolution.

Car bombings of Cubans perceived as sympathetic to Castro were so common that they created a market for remote starters, "enabling the intended victim to watch what might have been his own incineration from across the street," wrote Joan Didion in "Miami," a study of the Cuban exile community.

In 1988, Garcia led humanitarian efforts to reunite families that had fled Cuba. He later became executive director of the hawkish Cuban American National Foundation, which successfully lobbied for tightening the U.S. economic embargo. His work, he said, "helped create a lot of the rules for the religion of the embargo." □